

## Starry starry starry night: Star count may triple

By SETH BORENSTEIN,  
AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON – The night sky may be a lot starrier than we thought.

A study suggests the universe could have triple the number of stars scientists previously calculated. For those of you counting at home, the new estimate is 300,000,000,000,000,000,000,000. That's 300 sextillion.

The study questions a key assumption that astronomers often use: that most galaxies have the same properties as our Milky Way. And that's creating a bit of a stink among astronomers who want a more orderly cosmos.

It's one of two studies being published online Wednesday in the journal *Nature* that focus on red dwarf stars, the most common stars in the universe. The study that offers the new estimate on stars is led by a Yale University astronomer. He calculates that there are far more red dwarfs than previously thought, and that inflates the total star count.

A second study led by a Harvard University scientist focuses on a distant "super Earth" planet and sees clues to the content of its atmosphere — the first of this kind of data for this size planet. It orbits a red dwarf.

Red dwarf stars — about a fifth the size of our sun — burn slowly and last much longer than the bigger, brighter stars, such as the sun in the center of our solar system, said Yale astronomer Pieter van Dokkum. His study looks at how many red dwarfs are in elliptical-shaped galaxies.

*Continued on Next Page*

## Birds Of Paradise

The Snowy Egret is a keen hunter. Its weapon is lined up with its eyes. Its speed is one of its strategies. And in its neck it has a mechanism that assists in launching its weapon. Insects, little frogs and tiny fish make up the catch of the day. Very elegant, but very efficient just the same.... In Papiamentu it is a Garsa Blanco Chikito, in Dutch Amerikaanse Kleine Zilverreiger and Scientific Egretta Thula.

*Photo by Greg Peterson  
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## European police on alert for WikiLeaks founder

DARLENE SUPERVILLE  
MALIN RISING

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — WikiLeaks was on the defensive on several fronts Wednesday, scrambling to remain on the Internet and post more U.S. diplomatic documents while its fugitive founder Julian Assange was targeted by a European arrest warrant on Swedish rape charges.

Amazon.com Inc. prevented WikiLeaks from using the U.S. company's computers to distribute embarrassing State Department communications and other documents, WikiLeaks said Wednesday. The WikiLeaks site was unavailable for several hours before it moved back to servers owned by its previous Swedish host, Bahnhof, which are housed in a protective Cold-War era bunker.

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In this Nov. 4, 2010 file photo, Wikileaks founder Julian Assange takes his seat during a news conference at the Geneva press club in Geneva, Switzerland.

*Associated Press*

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This photo provided by NASA, taken in 2006 by the Hubble Space Telescope shows a cluster of diverse galaxies. A new study led by a Yale University astronomer looks at elliptical galaxies, such as the bright one in the top middle of this 2006 Hubble Space Telescope photograph, and finds they have far more stars than initially thought. That means the universe may have three times more stars than astronomers previously figured. The bright part of the Hubble photo shows a cluster of galaxies 450 million light years with the giant elliptical galaxy ESO 325-G004 looming large at the cluster's center.

(AP Photo/NASA)

### TRIPLE STARTS

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When scientists had estimated previously how many stars there were in the universe, they assumed that all galaxies had the same ratio of dwarf stars as in our galaxy, which is spiral-shaped. Much of our understanding of the universe is based on observations inside our Milky Way and then extrapolated to other galaxies. But about one-third of the galaxies in the universe are not spiral, but elliptical, and van Dokkum found they aren't really made up the same way as ours.

Using the Keck telescope in Hawaii, van Dokkum and a colleague gazed into eight other distant, but elliptical, galaxies and looked at their hard-to-differentiate light signatures. The scientists calculated that elliptical galaxies have more of those dwarf stars. A lot more.

"We're seeing 10 or 20 times more stars than we expected," van Dokkum said. By his calculations, that triples the number of estimated stars

from 100 sextillion to 300 sextillion. For the past month, astronomers have been buzzing about van Dokkum's findings, and many aren't too happy about it, said astronomer Richard Ellis of the California Institute of Technology.

Van Dokkum's paper challenges the assumption of "a more orderly universe" and gives credence to "the idea that the universe is more complicated than we think," Ellis said. "It's a little alarmist." Ellis said it is too early to tell if van Dokkum is right or wrong, but it is shaking up the field "like a cat among pigeons."

Van Dokkum agreed, saying, "Frankly, it's a big pain."

Ellis said the new study does make sense. Its biggest weakness might be its assumption that the chemical composition of dwarf stars is the same in elliptical galaxies as in the Milky Way. That might be wrong, Ellis said. Even if it is, it would mean there are only five times more red dwarf stars in elliptical galaxies than scientists

previously thought, instead of 10 or 20, van Dokkum said.

Slightly closer to home, at least in our own galaxy, one dwarf star has astronomers at Harvard taking another step in their search for life. They were able to home in on the atmosphere of a planet circling that star using the European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope in Chile. The planet lives up to the word alien. Their paper reports that this giant planet's atmosphere is either dense with sizzling water vapor like a souped-up steam bath, or it's full of hazy, choking hydrogen and helium clouds with a slightly blue tint. The latter is more likely, say the researchers and others not involved in the study.

While scientists have been able to figure out the atmosphere of gas giants the size of Jupiter or bigger, this is a first for the type of planet called a super Earth — something with a mass 2 to 10 times Earth's. It is more comparable to Neptune and circles a star about 42 light years from Earth. A light year is nearly 6 trillion miles. □



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# Winds lash the East, knock out power; roads flood

By JOHNNY C. CLARK,

Associated Press

BUFORD, Ga. — Winds whipped across the East Coast on Wednesday as the region wrestled with yet another day of heavy rain and severe weather that knocked out power to thousands, caused widespread damage and killed at least two people.

Tornado watches were issued for parts of the Virginias, and officials in Washington, D.C., handed out sandbags to protect homes from flooding. Thousands of customers were without electricity in the mid-Atlantic area and New York, and some schools delayed openings.

The storm system has brought suspected tornadoes to several Southeastern states since Monday, from Louisiana to South Carolina. The system was headed toward the Northeast, with colder air turning the rain into snow.

In an unincorporated area of suburban Atlanta, 54-year-old Matthew Mitchell died after

a tree fell on the car he was driving Tuesday in a storm. Police believe strong wind gusts blew the tree over.

In Buford, the National Weather Service says a tornado with winds as high as 130 mph swirled through, damaging more than 50 homes. No injuries were reported there. Tami O'Connor's house suffered considerable damage and the residence across the street was destroyed. She was home with her two children when the storm hit.

"It didn't take any more than two minutes.

As I walked into the living room to tell my kids to get into the basement, my living room imploded," she told The Associated Press. "Half of my living room was sucked into my backyard, but nobody was hurt. It was a miracle. The baby Jesus is still on the mantle."

Nearby, Reasey and Matthew Lee returned to their home Wednesday and heard their American Eskimo dog, Kirin,

whimpering. With the help of another man, they lifted a wall and Kirin came out.

"A house is a house ..." Matthew Lee told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, "but Kirin cannot be replaced." Insurance Commissioner John Oxendine surveyed the neighborhood from the air Wednesday and estimated insured losses at \$5 million.

"It was a small area that was hit, but the parts that were hit were hit bad," he said.

In Tennessee, a rock slide followed two inches of rain, blocking part of a highway between Knoxville and the airport. Flooding closed roads in the Carolinas, which saw up to six inches of rain in some areas. In Greenville County, S.C., 50-year-old Rita Hunter of Travelers Rest was killed Tuesday when she lost control of her car on a wet roadway, struck a tree and overturned.

Wet, wintry weather in Pennsylvania caused flooding and delayed school openings. More than 3 inches of rain



Peggy Gaines looks at what is left of an awning and fence at her home in Prattville, Ala. following a severe storm on Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2010.

(AP Photo/Montgomery Advertiser, Mickey Welsh)

had fallen in Pittsburgh since Tuesday morning, National Weather Service officials said, and the drenching forced the evacuation of dorms at the University of Pittsburgh satellite campus in Bradford near the New York state line. Classes were canceled. Earlier, the storm brought suspected tornadoes to Louisiana and Mississippi, where more than a dozen

people were injured. In Yazoo City, Miss., which was hit several months ago by a severe tornado, 63-year-old Clarence Taylor said the town again looked like a war zone. The winds blew off a tarp he had put on his roof to cover damage from the April storm. "This is the second time it dropped down on this street in just six months," Taylor said. "I've been through it, man." □



Job-seekers wait in line for assistance at a government-run employment center, in Las Vegas on November 9. Unemployment claims fell more than expected last week, compounding a steady downward trend seen in recent weeks.

By TOM BREEN,

Associated Press

Extended unemployment benefits for nearly 2 million Americans begin to run out Wednesday, cutting off a steady stream of income and guaranteeing a dismal holiday season for people already struggling with bills they cannot pay.

Unless Congress changes its mind, benefits that had been extended up to 99 weeks will end this month.

That means Christmas is out of the question for Wayne Pittman, 46, of Lawrenceville,

Ga., and his wife and 9-year-old son. The carpenter was working up to 80 hours a week at the beginning of the decade, but saw that gradually drop to 15 hours before it dried up completely. His last \$297 check will go to necessities, not presents. "I have a little boy, and that's kind of hard to explain to him," Pittman said. The average weekly unemployment benefit in the U.S. is \$302.90, though it varies widely depending on how states calculate the payment. Because of supplemental state programs

## 2 million lose jobless benefits as holidays arrive

and other factors, it's hard to know for sure who will lose their benefits at any given time. But the Labor Department estimates that, without a Congress-approved extension, about 2 million people will be cut off by Christmas.

Congressional opponents of extending the benefits beyond this month say fiscal responsibility should come first. Republicans in the House and Senate, along with a handful of conservative Democrats, say they're open to extending benefits, but not if it means adding to the \$13.8 trillion national debt.

Even if Congress does lengthen benefits, cash assistance is at best a stopgap measure, said Carol Hardison, executive director of Crisis Assistance Ministry in Charlotte, N.C., which has seen 20,000 new clients since the Great Recession started in December 2007.

"We're going to have to have a new conversation with the people who are still suffering, about the potentially drastic changes they're going to have to make to stay out of the

homeless shelter," she said. Forget Christmas presents. What the so-called "99ers" want most of all is what remains elusive in the worst economy in generations: a job. "I am not searching for a job, I am begging for one," said Felicia Robbins, 30, as she prepared to move out of a homeless shelter in Pensacola, Fla., where she and her five children have been living. She is using the last of her cash reserves, about \$500, to move into a small, unfurnished rental home.

Robbins lost her job as a juvenile justice worker in 2009 and her last \$235 unemployment check will arrive Dec. 13. Her 10-year-old car isn't running, and she walks each day to the local unemployment office to look for work.

Jeanne Reinman, 61, of Greenville, S.C., still has her house, but even that comes with a downside.

After losing her computer design job a year and a half ago, Reinman scraped by with her savings and a weekly \$351 unemployment check.

When her nest egg vanished in July, she started using her unemployment to pay off her mortgage and stopped paying her credit card bills. She recently informed a creditor she couldn't make payments on a loan because her benefits were ending.

"I'm more concerned about trying to hang onto my house than paying you," she told the creditor.

Ninety-nine weeks may seem like a long time to find a job. But even as the economy grows, jobs that vanished in the Great Recession have not returned. The private sector added about 159,000 jobs in October — half as many as needed to reduce the unemployment rate of 9.6 percent, which the Federal Reserve expects will hover around 9 percent for all of next year. "I apply for at least two jobs a day," said Silvia Lewis, of Nashville, Tenn., who's also drained her 401(k) and most of her other savings. "The constant thing that I hear, and a lot of my friends are in the same boat, is that you're overqualified." □



# US court orders GMO beets destroyed

WASHINGTON – A federal judge has ordered what is believed to be the first-ever destruction of a genetically modified crop in the United States, saying that the altered sugar beets were planted illegally. US District Judge Jeffrey White in California granted a preliminary injunction Tuesday sought by the Center for Food Safety and other groups, which contended that the Monsanto-produced sugar beet crops were planted without proper environmental

review.

He delayed implementation of the order until December 7 to allow time for an appeal.

White said in his ruling that “there is a significant risk that the plantings pursuant to the permits will cause environmental harm.”

He added that despite efforts to prevent contamination or cross-pollination of crops, there was no guarantee that the GMO crops would not affect other plants.

He said there have been

examples of contamination and that “these incidents are too numerous for this court to declare confidently that these permits provide sufficient containment to protect the environment.”

Paul Achitoff of Earthjustice, the lawyer for the plaintiffs, said the US Department of Agriculture, which was named as the defendant for issuing the permits “thumbed its nose at the judicial system and the public by allowing this crop to be grown without any



**A pile of sugar beets. A federal judge has ordered what is believed to be the first-ever destruction of a genetically modified crop in the United States, saying that the altered sugar beets were planted illegally**



**This undated handout photo provided by the The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) shows a demonstration of possible strangulation in a window shade cord. The death of a toddler who strangled in a window shade cord spurred a huge recall Wednesday, even as the industry crafts a better standard to make window coverings in American homes safer for children.**

(AP Photo)

## Lowe's recalls about 11M blinds, Roman shades

WASHINGTON – Lowe's recalled some 11 million blinds and Roman shades on Wednesday following concerns that children could strangle on the cords of the products.

The recall involves all styles and sizes of Roman shades and roll-up blinds sold by Lowe's — about 6 million shades and 5 million roll-up blinds.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission says two children became entangled in the exposed cord found on the backside of Roman shades while looking out of windows.

In a 2009 incident, a 2-year-old boy in Colorado was found with the inner cord wrapped around his arm and neck. The following year, a 4-year-old boy from South Carolina suffered a rope burn to his neck after getting tangled in the cord of a shade.

The recalled shades and blinds were sold at Lowe's stores, other retail stores and at <http://www.lowes.com> since at least 1999 through June of this year.

Consumers are advised to stop using the recalled products and contact the Window Covering Safety Council (WCSC) for repair kits at 800-506-4636 or visit <http://www.windowcoverings.org>.

Lowe's Home Centers Inc. is based in Wilkesboro, N.C., and Lowe's HIW Inc. is in Tukwila, Wash. □

environmental review.”

At issue is the planting of so-called Roundup Ready beets that allow the agribusiness giant Monsanto's Roundup herbicide to be used without harming the crops themselves.. “Herbicide resistant crops just like this have been shown to result in more toxic chemicals in our soil and water,” Achitoff

said.

“USDA has shown no regard for the environmental laws, and we're pleased that Judge White ordered the appropriate response.”

The center, which actively opposes biotech crops, said the case was the first in which a judge had ordered the destruction of plantings. □

## Activist pastor: Funeral home gunfire 'disturbing'

ST. LOUIS – A prominent activist pastor in St. Louis laments as “disturbing” the funeral home shootings that left two people dead outside what he says should be a safe haven.

St. Louis police said Wednesday investigators now are looking into witness reports that the shootings may have been an escalation of a dispute that happened inside

the funeral home. The gunfire erupted Tuesday outside Reliable Funeral Home during services for a man killed in an unsolved shooting Nov. 19. One man was critically wounded in the funeral home gunfire, and police were looking for a fourth person they believe was shot in a leg. The Rev. B.T. Rice says the bloodshed reflects disrespect for the mourning, the shocking prevalence of handguns, and perhaps the socioeconomic plight of the community. □

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# GOP says it'll block bills until tax cuts extended

By JULIE HIRSCHFELD DAVIS,

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Senate Republicans threatened Wednesday to block virtually all legislation until expiring tax cuts are extended and a bill is passed to fund the federal government, vastly complicating Democratic attempts to leave their own stamp on the final days of the post-election Congress.

“While there are other items that might ultimately be worthy of the Senate’s attention, we cannot agree to prioritize any matters above the critical issues of funding the government and preventing a job-killing tax hike,” all 42 GOP senators wrote in a letter to Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev. The 42 signatures are more than enough to block action on almost any item he wishes to advance.

The threat does not apply to a new arms control treaty with Russia that is pending, since it would be debated under rules that differ from those that apply to routine legislation. President Barack Obama has made ratification of the pact a top priority.

But it does threaten Democratic attempts to lift the Pentagon’s

ban on openly gay members of the military, a separate item to give legal status to young illegal immigrants who attend college or serve in the military, and a measure to expand first responders’ collective bargaining rights. The tax and spending bills are likely to be the last to pass before Congress adjourns for the year.

“Republicans have pleaded with Democrats to put aside their wish-list to focus on the things Americans want us to focus on. They’ve ignored us. The voters repudiated their agenda at the polls. They’ve ignored them. Time is running out. They’re ignoring that,” Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky said in remarks on the Senate floor. “The election was a month ago. It’s time to get serious. It’s time to focus on priorities.”

McConnell and Reid met Wednesday to discuss the legislative agenda, but no agreements were reached.

The Democratic to-do list also includes extending the expiring tax cuts — although they and Republicans differ on particulars, as well as a measure to keep the government in operation. But the rest of their agenda marks

an attempt to court voters Democrats need in 2012 to recapture the majority, including Hispanics, gay-rights activists and organized labor.

Call it lame-duck politics.

Take the so-called Dream Act, a measure to give young people whose parents brought them into the United States illegally before they were 16 a path to legal status by going to college or joining the armed forces.

The measure has enjoyed some degree of bipartisan support in the past, and Reid, the majority leader, vowed last month — in the thick of his tough re-election fight in heavily Hispanic Nevada — to hold a vote on it when Congress returned to finish its end-of-the-year business. He said Tuesday he’d move to overcome GOP objections and force a test vote, although it’s unclear when one will occur. Hispanic voters also played a major role in sparing other Democrats — including Sens. Michael Bennet of Colorado and Barbara Boxer of California — from being toppled by a GOP wave.

“There was a firewall in the West where Latino voters turned out in big numbers



Senate Majority Leader Sen. Harry Reid of Nev. gestures during a news conference on Capitol in Washington, Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2010.

(AP Photo/Manuel Balce Ceneta)

to reward people who championed them,” said Frank Sharry of America’s Voice, an immigrant advocacy group. “We’re going to try to make it painful” for those who oppose efforts to give illegal immigrants a path to legal status, he added.

Most Republicans vehemently oppose the Dream Act, saying it amounts to amnesty. And they decry the strategy of acting on such issues during the lame-duck session, accusing Democrats of playing politics and ignoring the message voters sent Nov. 2.

But Democrats also face pressure from their left flank. Gay-rights groups have

criticized Reid for not pushing hard enough to repeal the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy against openly gay soldiers, as the House has already voted to do.

Reid has promised to hold a Senate vote on the matter before year’s end, after hearings can be held later this week on a Pentagon report on the impact that openly serving gays would have on the military.

Republicans say they need to examine the report, which was issued Tuesday, before acting. It concluded that getting rid of the policy might cause some disruption at first but wouldn’t create widespread or long-lasting problems. □



Rep. Charles Rangel, D- N.Y., walks to his office on Capitol Hill office in Washington, Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2010.

(AP Photo/Evan Vucci)

By LARRY MARGASAK, Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In an extraordinary plea, Rep. Charles Rangel of New York asked supporters Wednesday to call the Capitol switchboard and urge their representatives to oppose a resolution to censure him. The House is scheduled to vote Thursday on

discipline for Rangel, whose fundraising and financial misdeeds violated House rules. Rangel’s letter to 25,000 campaign supporters asked them to argue that a censure is excessive. He is expected to speak on the floor of the House to urge a lesser reprimand.

A censure and reprimand require votes disapproving

## Rangel asks supporters to call Capitol switchboard

Rangel’s conduct, but only a censure calls for him to stand in the front of the chamber and have the resolution read to him by the speaker.

It’s not unusual for groups to rally supporters to call the Capitol to oppose or support legislation. But it’s highly unusual in a disciplinary case. Rangel was apologetic, writing, “I am truly sorry for my mistakes and would like your help in seeing that I am treated fairly.”

Rangel said the House ethics committee’s recommendation for censure “is excessive and that my lapses do not rise to the level of transgressions of those censured in the past.”

The 80-year-old Rangel must overcome the ethics panel’s 9-1 vote to recommend a censure — the most serious discipline short of expulsion. On Tuesday, newly released

documents showed Rangel’s lawyers were bogged down with procedural issues in his ethics case — possibly explaining how he ended up unable to pay them and was forced to represent himself.

The documents were presented to the House Tuesday by its ethics committee, the final step before a vote on a resolution to censure Rangel for financial and fundraising misconduct. The vote is likely this week. Shortly before Rangel’s Nov. 15 ethics trial, his defense team from the Zuckerman Spaeder law firm withdrew after the congressman said he could no longer pay them.

Rangel, who changed firms during the case, has said he spent about \$2 million in legal fees from his campaign funds. Federal election records show about \$1.4 million went to the Zuckerman firm.

The documents show that the defense team sparred with the ethics committee and, at one point, misunderstood the rules for responding to charges of ethics violations.

Ultimately, Rangel broke through the procedural morass and spoke on the floor of the House to answer 13 counts of ethics violations — 11 of which eventually were adopted by the ethics committee.

He said he erred in his failure to pay taxes on rental income from his villa in the Dominican Republic and in his incomplete financial disclosure reports, but never intended to break House rules. He walked out of his ethics trial Nov. 15, saying his lawyers abandoned him and he could not defend himself without more time to hire a new defense team. The trial went on without him. □



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**John Skelton appears at this extradition hearing in Lucas County Court in Toledo, Ohio, Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2010. Skelton, an unemployed long-haul truck driver, was arrested Tuesday on three counts of parental kidnapping of his sons 9-year-old Andrew, 7-year-old Alexander and 5-year-old Tanner Skelton, who have not been seen since Thanksgiving.**  
(AP Photo/Paul Sancya)

## Father of 3 missing boys fights return to Mich.

By COREY WILLIAMS,  
Associated Press

MORENCI, Mich. — A father charged with kidnapping his three missing boys fought extradition from Ohio to Michigan on Wednesday as an army of volunteers set off to trudge through fields, woodlands and dirt roads to search for the brothers who have not been seen since Thanksgiving.

John Skelton, a 39-year-old unemployed long-haul truck driver, sat throughout the court hearing in Toledo, Ohio, in a wheelchair covered by a green blanket, answering the judge's yes-or-no questions in a whisper. His attorney told the judge his client would fight his return to Michigan. Skelton was arrested Tuesday on three counts of parental kidnapping, and so far, police say, he hasn't told investigators much about where the boys might be. After Skelton fought extradition, the judge in Ohio set bond at \$3 million and scheduled another hearing for Dec. 14.

Shortly afterward, Morenci Police Chief Larry Weeks said he expected the search for the boys to continue into next week, and said investigators hadn't spoken with Skelton in "some time." Asked whether he thought the children had been killed, he said he refused to believe that "at this point."

"It is my desire to maintain hope," he told reporters during a Wednesday news conference. "But as I said yesterday, the information we have did not indicate that this is going to have a positive outcome." Weeks said Wednesday that authorities will ask the small army of volunteer searchers who have been scouring the wilderness in and around Morenci to break for the weekend starting Friday evening. He said authorities want to take the weekend to decide how to proceed with the search next week.

More than 200 volunteers turned out Monday and Tuesday to help investigators comb through fields, wooded areas

and campgrounds in search of 9-year-old Andrew, 7-year-old Alexander and 5-year-old Tanner Skelton. The boys were last seen on Thanksgiving playing in the backyard of their father's home in Morenci, a town of about 2,000 residents about 75 miles southwest of Detroit.

A similar search in Ohio was conducted a few weeks ago about 130 miles to the southeast after a mother from Howard, Ohio, her friend, 13-year-old daughter and 11-year-old son disappeared. Police say the girl was found bound and gagged in a 30-year-old unemployed tree-cutter's basement and that he led them to the dismembered bodies of the other three stuffed in a hollow tree trunk.

Three buses took volunteers from the Morenci fire hall to search areas on Wednesday morning. Michelle Williams was to be among them.

Michelle Williams, 45, said she brought chili to the hall this week for the volunteers. □



BONNE TERRE, Mo. — Police were trying to determine Wednesday what spurred a man to show up with a gun at an eastern Missouri apartment duplex where he killed his ex-girlfriend, her mother and that woman's boyfriend before turning the gun on himself when confronted by officers. A coroner also said the death of a young woman shot in a neighboring county may be linked to the killings Tuesday that shook the small former

mining town of Bonne Terre. Bonne Terre Police Chief Doug Calvert identified the gunman Wednesday as 25-year-old Nathan Fortner, whose last known address was in nearby Festus. The victims were his former girlfriend, 19-year-old Danielle Dement, her mother, 37-year-old Christine Snider, and Snider's live-in boyfriend, 32-year-old Derek Nash. Dement had been temporarily living at the duplex.

## Police try to learn what spurred duplex shootings

Calvert said Dement and Fortner were the parents of an 18-month-old boy found unhurt with Dement in a black sport utility vehicle at the apartment. He said the relationship had apparently ended, though it wasn't known if lost love was the motive for the shooting.

"I have no idea what was in his mind," Calvert said. "Somebody who could commit a crime this horrible, I could only speculate."

Police first received a call Tuesday morning that a man was trying to break down the door at the duplex on a quiet and secluded cul de sac in the town of 7,000 residents about 55 miles southwest of St. Louis.

Calvert responded. As soon as he arrived, he received a chilling call from his dispatcher.

"They said, 'shots fired, chief,

shots fired,'" Calvert recalled. "Then I saw the male subject running away."

Other officers arrived and confronted Fortner about 500 feet away as he ran toward a wooded area not far from North County High School. Fortner turned the handgun on himself. He died instantly.

Back at the duplex, Calvert found Nash dead in the doorway and Snider dead in a bedroom. A 3-year-old boy was in the house but not physically harmed.

Police soon found Dement in the SUV with her son, where she had apparently been trying to protect the boy. She was alive but died at a hospital a short time later.

Late Tuesday, the body of a 20-year-old woman was found just outside a home near Bismarck in Washington County. St. Francois County Coroner Jim Coplin said

it appeared her death was connected to the others because she knew both Fortner and one of the other victims. Missouri State Highway Patrol Sgt. Al Nothum said state investigators weren't yet willing to make that connection, and the case was under investigation.

The woman was reported missing Monday night. Her name was not released.

Calvert said an 11-year-old child also lived in the Bonne Terre apartment but was at school at the time of the killings. He wasn't sure of the relationships of the 11-year-old and 3-year-old. All three children were put in the care of the Missouri Division of Family Services.

"The 18-month-old is probably too young to remember, but I worry about what the 3-year-old will remember," Calvert said. □





**Rare!**



## Aruban snakes sent to US

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. -- Some of the rarest rattlesnakes in the world have just made their way to the Valley.

Three Aruba Island Rattlesnakes arrived in Scottsdale last week. They will be part of Phoenix Herpetological Society's educational program.

Aruba Island Rattlesnakes exist naturally only in 10 square miles of the world. They grow to about 4 feet long and are considered critically endangered. The Aruba Island rattlesnake, also called the Aruban cascabel, is indigenous to the island and the one of the rarest rattlesnakes in the world. It has distinctive markings in pale pink, blue and brown.

The Phoenix Herpetological Society said zoos are usually the only organizations to be allowed to keep Aruba rattlers. Society president Russ Johnson said they are thrilled to have them as part of their exhibit.

"It took us six months to get the federal permit," said Johnson.

Johnson said the snakes were bred in captivity and donated by a private collector from Germany.

"The gentleman's name is Jan. He loves our program and just thought it would be a tremendous addition to our exhibit and education program. He's a proponent of education," said Johnson.

Right now, the snakes are being kept in quarantine for a few months -- in a bedroom in the curator's home -- to make sure they're healthy.

The Phoenix Herpetological Society is a nonprofit sanctuary and educational organization. For more information, go to [www.phoenixherp.com](http://www.phoenixherp.com).

*American Home Assurance 2011 Calendar*

## A tribute to the Beautiful Birds Of Aruba



PALM BEACH - It is the 10th year that American Home Assurance Company has worked on a calendar based on the popular Aruban themes. The very popular ones so far were the 'Money of Aruba', '50 years of Carnival in Aruba', 'Flora y Fauna di Aruba' and 'Nos Pais'. For the year 2009 & 2010, the theme of our Calendar was 'Imagine Aruba'. On popular demand, the Company has decided to repeat this theme for the year 2011.

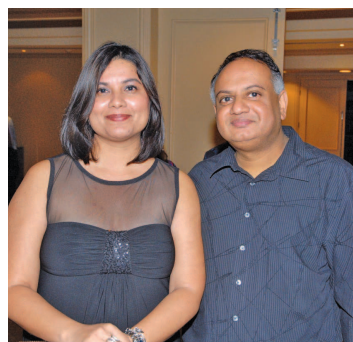
Our Company would like to thank Mr. Gregory M. Peterson for his collection of photos that he is sharing for this purpose. Greg has founded a foundation called Aruba Birdlife Conservation in May 2010 to contribute to our island's urgent wildlife conservation needs. The calendar is thus dedicated to ecology and preservation of wildlife.

Mr. Prakash Gupta, Managing Director of the company would like to thank Greg Peterson for dedicating quite some time towards perfection of



the text and pictures and also Prographics, the Company's Printers for a timely print out of the calendars. American Home Assurance has decided to donate one thousand calendars extra to the Aruba Birdlife Conservation and these calendars can be purchased by contacting them.

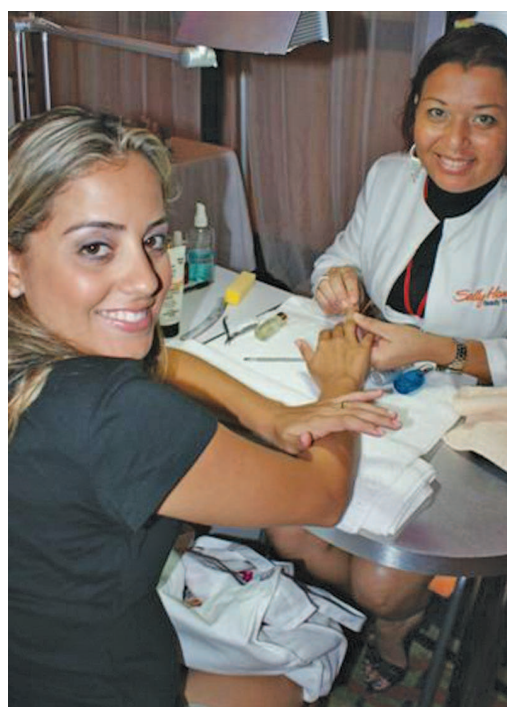
Accompanying photos show the launch of calendar at the ballroom of Westin Aruba. □





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# The Women's Expo Show attracts a festive crowd



Palm Beach – The weekend was busy at the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa, Grand Caribbean Ballroom, as the Women's Expo Show unfolded with fashion shows, celebrity appearances, presentations, demonstrations, conferences, free samples, prizes and giveaways, charity drives and beauty makeovers. Conceived by Diana and Danny Biemans the

activity attracted a great number of women who came to meet Lupita Jones, Miss Universe 1991 and Dr. 90210 Robert M Rey, of E! Television channel. The event was sponsored by Geox, Tiara Air, Chevrolet, Stern Motors, The Marriott Aruba Resort, Copa Airlines and Medicosmetics. The resort's Larimar Spa, one of the expo's most

successful exhibitors, offered complimentary chair massages and enjoyed incredible popularity as all visitors lined up for a taste of the spa's menu of services. Pictured here the slew of activities and fun, offered at the three day expo, at the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa. □

## Palm Beach boasts authentic Mediterranean cuisine



By ARUBA TODAY  
PALM BEACH -- When we say Mediterranean cuisine, we mean the food from the adjacent nation-states sharing the shores of the Mediterranean, embracing many cultures and influenced by varied customs. At Casa Tua Mediterranea, the menu offers a trip around that sunshiny, lively part of the world, without ever having to buy an airline ticket, starting at the Atlantic and traveling traverse Europe to Turkey, on to the Middle East and North Africa. We discovered that the chefs choose the best, most delicious dishes from France, Italy,



cooking with our Grilled Whole Red Snapper, flavored with herbs de Provence, and our Mussels, taste the way they're served in the port of Marseille. Our thin crust Italian Pizza, needs no introduction, as it has earned a huge following in both the other restaurants, Casa Tua Pizzeria and Casa Tua Barcelona. To top off the authentic Mediterranean feast, the Oriental belly dancers entertain every night and you may complement the exotic evening with a flavored hookah pipe and endless new st le cocktails featuring Strawberry Field Mojito, and Bubble Royal Champagne Martin. Casa Tua is your-home-in-Aruba, a perfect spot for people who love to live, and love to eat and party.

Greece, and Tunisia, and paired them with most famous Middle-Eastern appetizers and salads to present a formidable culinary trip around the Mediterranean Sea, enjoyed in the contemporary indoor dining room which includes a cozy lounge area or on the dining terrace overlooking the action at the new bustling Palm Beach Plaza. Spanokopitakia, brick oven baked filo pastries filled with Greek cheese and spinach, famous Tzaziki, a yogurt and cucumber dip, and popular Babaganoush and Hummus, with authentic pita bread, are some of the most popular appetizers.

For main courses our traditional Moussaka is justly called, the best you will ever have, and the genuine Tunisian Couscous, loaded with merguez, chicken and lamb, is rivaled only by the Tenderloin, Lamb and Chicken kebabs. Casa Tua pays homage to provincial



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*Women in difficulties celebrates 15 years*

# Former Miss Universe speaks at the Marriott



PALM BEACH – On Friday November 26, the nan den dificultad celebrated its 15th anniversary at the Fundacion pa hende muher Aruba Marriott. As a part of

Marriott's Spirit to Serve our Communities, the Marriott teamed up with Women's Expo, contributing to organize a glorious event in the hotel's Grand Ballroom.

Ms. Ivonne Spellen, president of the foundation proudly welcomed her guests and thanked them for their continuous support to the foundation. Mr. Luigi Cortes, former Sparkling Tour winner, impressed the public with a great performance.

Ms. Lupita Jones, former Miss Universe 1991 made a special appearance, educating the public with an interesting lecture about rejuvenation together with Diego Ramon di Marco, expert in anti aging. Afterwards, Aruba's top



singer Sharon Rose had the crowd dancing and singing along with her songs. Trash by Ronchi models gave a spectacular fashion show of Trash boutique collection followed by Gaita Fortaleza

as closing act.

The Aruba Marriott congratulates the Fundacion pa hende muher nan den dificultad with their 15th anniversary and wishes them the best of luck in the future. □

## You are never too old to enjoy Sinterklaas



SAVANETA - Sinterklaas made a surprise appearance at Huize Maris Stella, the home for the elderly in Savaneta. He brought two cheerful Zwarte Pieten with him, who doled out pepernoten to the happy inhabitants of the home and its staff. Dressed in his customary red, velvet robe and wearing his mitre, the Sint had quite a lot of names written in his big book.

These were the people who received small gifts and sweets for having been so exceptionally well behaved this past year. Although his visit to Maris Stella was early (Sinterklaas' birthday is on December 5), Sinterklaas was welcomed with songs and a huge cake.

Photos show Sinterklaas and his Zwarte Pieten in action last Tuesday morning. That was also the day that the Clown Doctors of Aruba pay a visit to the Maris Stella home. □



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# Get ready, for the Christmas Blackjack Tournament at Cool Casino

PALM BEACH – Slated for Sunday December 26th at 5:30pm, the Christmas Blackjack Tournament at Cool Casino will be the highlight of this year's holiday fun, a time to compete for a share of the generous \$10,000 cash purse.

The Christmas Blackjack Tournament will take Cool Casino over with the excitement of players competing against other players instead of just playing against the house.

December 26th, Boxing Day, may become quite profitable for players who sign up. The inscription for \$100 starts on December 1st and players will be given the option to re-buy for \$50.

Gaming will start at 5:30pm on Boxing Day, and will conclude when the \$10,000 are won. If you are a smart player, you have an edge, an advantage, using basic strategies and playing better than average!

Cool Casino also informs that it just struck a deal with Aruba Wine and Dine, an agreement valid at nine fine restaurants, to award patrons \$10 promotional slot cash for every \$75 spent on lunch or dinner, as a terrific added-value.

Pictured here images from the recent live TV production, where everyone was invited! □



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E-mail: news@arubatoday.com

## HUMAN HINTS

# Release The Outcome

In the physical world, the importance of an effort is defined by the result. Beyond the physical illusion, however, the pursuit is all that matters.

In the physical world, we must release our emotion from the results of our efforts in order to embrace the pursuit with passion. The idea is to be as passionate as possible while not caring at all if we succeed or fail. Detaching our emotions from the outcome allows us to focus our passion and attention on the present moment of the journey.

We must release the desire for something because we have to move our focus away from one thing in order to focus on another thing. When we want something, our focus is on our desire. When we let go of wanting something, we can focus on something besides our desire.

When we're focused on a specific outcome, we're trying to control our lives. When we think we can control our lives, the Universe will make it clear that we cannot. Focused on a specific outcome, we become stuck in a specific future and our emotions become dependent on something completely out of our control.

We can't control the results of our efforts, and we shouldn't try. We become empowered when we acknowledge our own growth in the face of what we define as success and failure. It doesn't matter if we get what we work for. It matters that we work toward a goal. In struggle, we grow. In complacency, we stagnate.

Until Tomorrow.

Go to [www.HumanHints.com](http://www.HumanHints.com) to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

### ~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you chose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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Secretary Clinton and Representative King Get Wiki!



## 'We cannot deal with these people': WikiLeaks shows true feelings on Guantánamo

By Marisa L. Porges

London – Among the hundreds of thousands of cables released by Wikileaks, it's not surprising that those covering sensitive negotiations over Guantánamo are receiving special attention. News of the detention facility has made headlines for years, and now everyone can see details of secret, behind-the-scenes discussions about the detainees during both the Obama and Bush administrations.

But what may come as a surprise is that these classified documents don't support the notion that the failure to close Guantánamo is a failure of US diplomacy. Rather, the WikiLeaks documents suggest that Guantánamo is still open for business – and will continue to stay open, despite Obama's best efforts – in large part because the international community is not ready to deal with its closure.

Related: WikiLeaks: What the world is saying  
What to do with detainees  
For years, Washington has placed heavy emphasis on efforts to send Guantánamo detainees to their home countries or, ultimately, any place that would treat them humanely and manage the threat they pose. When I served at the Defense Department, I was part of a team of US officials sent around the world to convince countries to take their citizens back and provide assurances that both the detainees and the international community would remain safe after their release. Cables cannot begin to describe the curious nature of these sensitive discussions, which sometimes felt more cloak and dagger than anything worthy of a State Department report.

To a large degree, these efforts have been successful. The Bush administration transferred over 500 detainees this way, and the Obama administration has transferred over 65 more. Moreover, even a quick look at cables released thus far suggests that Guantánamo's delayed closure may not be Washington's failure but, rather, it may be the true preference – the deep down truth "you don't talk about at parties" preference – of many in the international community. Related: WikiLeaks: Bradley

Manning isn't a criminal. He's a hero.

Don't send them here  
When discussing the future of the Kuwaiti detainees, Kuwait's minister of interior told a US official "You know better than I that we cannot deal with these people (i.e. the GTMO detainees)." And while publicly demanding that the United States send all the Yemeni detainees home, Yemeni leaders privately haggle over how much money Washington will pay to have them repatriated. Even Luxemborg fully supports the detention facility's closure but, like many of its neighbours, "cannot accept detainees for resettlement."

This refrain is typical: In public, world leaders – including many Arab officials whose own citizens are in custody – respond to domestic political pressure by demanding Guantánamo's closure and the release of detainees held there. In private, they admit that freeing these detainees may not be the safest option – for the detainee's own country, much less the United States or international community.

'Alternative solutions'  
What may be the most delightfully revealing part of the released Guantánamo cables is the list of "alternative solutions" suggested. The Kuwaiti minister's advice: "You picked them up in Afghanistan; you should drop them off in Afghanistan" is high on the list. Equally wonderful is the unconventional proposal by Saudi Arabia's King Abdulla who suggested implanting detainees "with an electronic chip...and allowing their movements to be tracked with Bluetooth."

As more classified Guantanamo discussions come to light, they will continue to reveal similarly curious negotiations and strange "We don't want them, but how about you..." options. However, one thing is clear: Guantánamo has long been an issue the international community preferred to keep on Washington's agenda, despite public proclamations otherwise. We should expect Guantánamo to remain open for some time. But, moving forward, we should place responsibility for that not just with the United States but with the entire international community. □



# Hamas PM: We're ready for referendum on peace deal

KARIN LAUB

Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP) — Hamas would respect any peace deal reached between Israel and Western-backed Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, provided it is approved in a global Palestinian referendum, the top Hamas official in Gaza said Wednesday.

In a rare news conference for foreign media, Ismail Haniyeh, the prime minister of Gaza's Hamas government, staked out seemingly pragmatic positions. He said Hamas seeks dialogue with the West and wants to be "part of the solution, not the problem."

He also denied Israeli allegations that al-Qaida operates in Gaza and that Gaza militants planned to carry out attacks in neighboring Egypt. Haniyeh is considered a leading member of Hamas' pragmatic wing, and the Islamic militant group often sends mixed messages. When Israeli-Palestinian negotiations resumed in early September, other Hamas politicians quickly criticized Abbas for attending those talks.

Negotiations have since run aground over the continued construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem, war-won lands claimed by the Palestinians for their state.

In his news conference, Haniyeh was also highly critical, saying negotiations seem pointless. "Israel wants a full surrender from us and we are not going to do this," he said.

Nonetheless, he said his government remains committed to the referendum idea which was part of a short-lived Palestinian unity deal reached in 2007, a few months before the violent Hamas takeover of the territory.

Referring to that document, Haniyeh said that "we don't have a problem with establishing a viable Palestinian state with full sovereignty on the land that was occupied in 1967." Those territories include Gaza, along with the West Bank and east

Jerusalem.

In recent years, Hamas has tried to reach out to the West, and its supreme leader in exile, Khaled Mashaal, has expressed support for a Palestinian state in 1967 borders.

At the same time, Hamas has not revoked its founding charter which calls for Israel's destruction, and Hamas officials won't say whether they see a two-state deal as a final arrangement or a step toward eliminating Israel.

Israel argues that Hamas hasn't given up its goal of eliminating the Jewish state.

"If Hamas really wanted to reach out for peace, it could have done so very simply by accepting the three conditions of the Quartet (of Mideast mediators), which are to recognize Israel, recognize past Israeli-Palestinian agreements, and abandon terror," said Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Yigal Palmor.

Since the violent Hamas takeover, Gaza has been largely cut off from the world by an Israeli-Egyptian border blockade. The international community has shunned Hamas and the Palestinian political split has deepened. Abbas now governs the West Bank.

Following Israel's war on Gaza two years ago, meant to halt a barrage of rockets on Israeli border towns, Hamas has largely held its fire. However, smaller militant groups, including some inspired by al-Qaida, have continued to carry out sporadic mortar and rocket attacks on Israel.

Last month, Israel killed three operatives of an al-Qaida-inspired group, the Army of Islam, in airstrikes in Gaza, saying the men planned to carry out attacks in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula.

A senior military official told The Associated Press this week that it is not clear whether the militants had planned to kidnap Israeli tourists in the Sinai or use Egypt as a gateway to sneak into Israel to carry out attacks there.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity in



Gaza's Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh speaks at his office in Gaza City, Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2010. Haniyeh on Wednesday denied Israeli allegations that al-Qaida operates in the territory and that Gaza militants planned to carry out attacks in neighboring Egypt.

Associated Press

line with military briefing regulations, said several armed Gaza militants were still hiding in the Sinai.

He also alleged that al-Qaida operatives from Yemen have been training militants in Gaza, and that Hamas has obtained thousands of rockets, via smuggling tunnels under the Egyptian border, that can strike deep into Israel.

Haniyeh said such claims are part of a disinformation

campaign meant to prepare the ground for future attacks on Gaza.

"There is no such thing as al-Qaida in Gaza," Haniyeh said, adding that "the Palestinian resistance does not work outside the borders of Palestine."

Haniyeh said he sent a letter to Egyptian intelligence chief Omar Suleiman, assuring him that Palestinian militants have no plans to attack targets in

Arab or Islamic countries.

Haniyeh said his government is also monitoring and attempting to rein in Gaza's homegrown zealots, but trying to avoid confrontation.

Hamas has traditionally focused on its conflict with Israel, carrying out scores of suicide bombings and other attacks on Israelis over the years, but has refrained from hitting foreign targets. □

## War crimes court: arrest Sudan's al-Bashir

AMSTERDAM — The International Criminal Court has urged the Central African Republic to arrest Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, a war crimes suspect, if he makes his planned visit to the country on Wednesday.

The court said the country should arrest al-Bashir, who is scheduled to attend the country's independence day celebrations, on suspicion of war crimes and alleged genocide in Darfur, or explain why it cannot.

Several nations have previously declined to carry out the court's international warrant, citing fears it could derail efforts to end the seven-year conflict in Sudan's western Darfur region. The conflict has left up to 300,000 people dead and forced 2.7 million to flee their homes, according to U.N. figures.

The Central African Republic is, however, a signatory to the international treaty establishing the Hague, Netherlands-based court — a formal promise to abide by its rules.

Al-Bashir denies wrongdoing and rejects the authority of the Hague, Netherlands-based court known as the ICC. The U.N. Security

Council granted the ICC jurisdiction over Sudanese war crimes in 2005, but the court has no police force or ability to enforce its orders without cooperation from governments.

The Central African Republic has previously supported the court's arrest of Congo's former vice president Jean-Pierre Bemba, now on trial at the ICC. Bemba allegedly allowed militias under his command to carry out rapes on a wide scale in Central African Republic in 2002-2003.

He has pleaded not guilty.

Fellow ICC treaty signatories Chad and Kenya passed on previous opportunities to arrest al-Bashir. Kenya in particular faced heavy international criticism for failing to arrest al-Bashir in August, including from U.S. President Barack Obama. Kenya then ducked out of hosting an event al-Bashir was to attend in October. Al-Bashir has continued to visit countries where he is not likely to face arrest, such as Ethiopia, which is not a member of the ICC. He traveled to Saudi Arabia last month on a Muslim pilgrimage. □



**WIKILEAKS***Continued from Front Page*

At the same time, Swedish officials intensified legal pressure on Assange by asking European police to arrest him on rape allegations that have shadowed him for weeks. Swedish Director of Public Prosecution Marianne Ny said the European arrest warrant had been issued for Assange in connection with the allegations filed against him in that country.

Amazon's move to kick WikiLeaks off its servers came after congressional staff called the company Tuesday to inquire about its relationship with WikiLeaks, Sen. Joe Lieberman, the Connecticut independent, said Wednesday.

"The company's decision to cut off Wikileaks now is the right decision and should set the standard for other companies Wikileaks is using to distribute its illegally seized material," Lieberman said in a statement. He added that he would have further questions for Amazon about its dealings with WikiLeaks.

The White House said Wednesday it was taking new actions to protect government secrets after WikiLeaks' release of thousands of sensitive U.S. diplomatic cables. Officials said national security adviser Tom Donilon has appointed a senior aide to identify and develop changes needed in light of the document dump.

The White House also spurned a suggestion by Assange that Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton should resign if she had any role in directing U.S. diplomats' spying on other foreign leaders. "Mr. Assange's suggestion is ridiculous and absurd, and why anyone would find his opinion here relevant is baffling," said spokesman Tommy Vietor. He said Clinton is doing an "extraordinary" job. The White House says U.S. diplomats do not engage in spying.

Clinton was in Astana, Kazakhstan, enduring repeated comments about the WikiLeaks disclosures as she met with foreign officials at a conference of international leaders.

Among those she met with was Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who had been described in newly released U.S. diplomatic cables as "feckless" and a party animal.

"We have no better friend, we have no one who supports the American policies as consistently as Prime Minister Berlusconi has, starting in the Clinton administration, through the Bush administration, and now the Obama administration," she said during a summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

A senior State Department official said that in her meeting with Berlusconi, the Italian leader raised the WikiLeaks matter, saying the publicity it had generated in Italy was a political problem for him. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity in order to describe a private conversation, said Clinton expressed regret for the leak, calling it an illegal act. The WikiLeaks matter was discussed in virtually all of Clinton's private one-on-one meetings with European leaders and foreign ministers during the summit

meeting Wednesday.

"I have certainly raised the issue of the leaks in order to assure our colleagues that it will not in any way interfere with American diplomacy or our commitment to continuing important work that is ongoing," Clinton said.

Assange's call for Clinton's resignation came in an online interview Tuesday with Time magazine from an undisclosed location. Assange said Clinton should step down "if it can be shown that she was responsible for ordering U.S. diplomatic figures to engage in espionage in the United Nations" in violation of international agreements. State Department officials have acknowledged that secret instructions to American diplomats to gather sensitive personal information about foreign leaders originated from the U.S. intelligence community. Diplomats were not required to spy, the officials said.

Assange remained a fugitive Wednesday, shadowed by the Europe-wide arrest warrant.

A German security official, speaking on condition of anonymity because no authorization was given to discuss the legal steps, confirmed that a warrant for Assange had been issued in that country.

Assange's London-based lawyer, Mark Stephens, complained his client had yet to receive formal notice of the allegations he faces, which Stephens described as a legal requirement under European law. The lawyer added that Assange had repeatedly offered to answer questions about the investigation, to no avail.

The 39-year-old Australian computer hacker has been out of public sight since a Nov. 5 news conference in Geneva. He has spoken publicly only through online interviews, while a statement from his

lawyer said the Australian was being persecuted by Swedish officials seeking his arrest on allegations of rape, sexual molestation and unlawful coercion.

In Australia, Attorney General Robert McClelland said Wednesday that Australia would detain Assange if possible in response to a warrant filed in the Swedish case by Interpol. McClelland said his government is required under international agreements to honor the Interpol warrant.

The exact nature of the allegations facing Assange are not completely clear. Stephens has in the past described them as a part of "a post-facto dispute over consensual, but unprotected sex." Even Swedish prosecutors have disagreed about whether to label the most serious charge as rape. Formal charges have not been filed, but a detention order issued at Ny's request on Nov. 18 remains in force pending an appeal by Assange. The case is now before Sweden's Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, Assange's secret-spilling group is still in the process of disclosing hundreds of classified State Department cables, which have revealed requests for U.S. diplomats to gather personal information on their foreign counterparts, highlighted Western concerns that Islamist militants might get access to Pakistan's nuclear material and American skepticism that Islamabad will sever ties to Taliban factions fighting in Afghanistan.

According to a diplomatic cable released just Wednesday, U.S. envoys met in November 2009 with two former aides to Brazilian President Fernandez de Kirchner. One of the aides, Sergio Massa, described Kirchner as a "monster," a "psychopath," and a "coward." Kirchner died in October 2010. □



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# Bitter cold kills 8, slams air traffic in Europe

FRANK JORDANS

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP)—Heavy snow and subzero temperatures swept across Europe, killing at least eight homeless people in Poland, closing major airports in Britain and Switzerland and causing hundreds of highway accidents.

Gatwick, London's second largest airport, and Geneva, a major hub for low-cost carrier Easyjet, were forced to shut down Wednesday as staff struggled to clear runways of snow. Edinburgh airport in Scotland, Leeds airport in northern England, and Chambéry and Grenoble in southeastern France also were closed.

Eurocontrol, the central air control agency, reported severe flight delays in Brussels, Frankfurt, Munich, Vienna, Prague and Paris Orly. In Poland, police said eight men died Tuesday night after a bitter cold front roared in, with temperatures falling to around -4 Fahrenheit. Police spokesman Mariusz Sokolowski said the men, from different parts of the country, had been drinking. The eastern Polish city of Białystok hit -15 Fahrenheit on Tuesday night.

Winter weather caused some 2,000 accidents on German roads Tuesday, officials said. In northern Austria, police said a 69-year-old retiree froze to death overnight when he slipped on a snow-covered bridge on his way home from a funeral and lost consciousness.

France's DGAC civil aviation authority asked airlines to cancel 25 percent of scheduled flights out of Charles de Gaulle airport and 10 percent of flights out of Orly airport in Paris on Thursday. The authority on Wednesday urged passengers flying out of the airports to check with their airlines.

Officials at Gatwick, south of London, said the airport would remain closed until early Thursday, stranding about 600 flights that were expected to leave Wednesday. Extra staff were working "around the clock" to clear the runways, and passengers were

advised to check with their airline or Gatwick's website for updates.

Gatwick was under five to six inches of snow Wednesday morning and has seen continuous snowfall throughout the day, said spokeswoman Andrea Hopkins, adding that she was unable to provide a current estimate.

Geneva's airport will be closed until at least 6 p.m. Wednesday, a spokesman said. The city has seen 10 inches of fresh snow in the past 24 hours and many travelers unable to find a room spent the night in civil protection shelters.

Zurich, Switzerland's biggest airport, reported delays and cancellations on the day many VIPs, including former President Bill Clinton and Spanish Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, were traveling to FIFA's headquarters to push their countries' bids to host the 2018 and 2022 football World Cups.

Airport spokeswoman Sonja Zoehling said the presence of so many private jets and charter planes in Zurich meant the airport had to turn down requests Wednesday for diverted landings.

Swiss weather agency Meteosuisse forecast more snow throughout the day as a low-pressure front centered over western Europe moves slowly eastward.

"We've got unusually cold air over large parts of the eastern Atlantic, and where that meets warm air coming for example from the Mediterranean you have a lot of snow," said meteorologist Heinz Maurer. He predicted that snowfall would ease in central Europe by Thursday, but nights will remain extremely cold.

La Brevine, in northwestern Switzerland, recorded temperatures of -24 Fahrenheit overnight, Maurer said.

Even the undersea Channel Tunnel was hit with travel delays due to the snow. Six Eurostar trains to and from London were canceled and delays on other services were expected.

In Ireland, flights from Dublin airport were temporarily



Snow covered planes stand at London Gatwick airport, Horley, England, Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2010. Gatwick airport is closed due to continuing severe weather gripping Britain.

Associated Press

suspended early Wednesday while thick snow and ice was cleared from a main runway. With many schools closed and minor roads impassable due to snow, authorities urged drivers to stay home unless absolutely necessary. Grocery chain Tesco said the cold snap had seen a rise in sales of whiskey — often served warm in winter — and hot chocolate. Nine regions in northwest and southeast France were put on a weather alert, warning of snow and ice until Thursday morning. SNCF, France's national railway, said traffic

on the main southeast routes had been affected by heavy snow, but 80 percent of its high-speed trains were still running.

In Poland, police were carrying out patrols to find homeless people and get them into shelters.

The bad weather was also blamed for a collision between a tram and a car that killed one person in Szczecin.

Further south, some 300 people were evacuated from their homes in the northern part of Montenegro because of heavy rains. Authorities in the

town of Berane said dozens of homes and roads were flooded and more evacuations were likely.

Neighboring Albania declared a state of emergency due to widespread flooding in Shkodra district, 75 miles northwest of the capital, Tirana, along the Drini River delta.

Hydroelectric power generated from the river covers the bulk of Albania's energy needs. Prime Minister Sali Berisha says the flooding has resulted in an increase of energy output. □

## U.S., China close in on accord on key climate issue

By ARTHUR MAX

Associated Press

CANCUN, Mexico — The United States and China appeared close to agreement Wednesday on a key issue that has troubled climate change negotiations, boosting prospects that talks on global warming will score their first success in years. Analysts said the tone over measuring emissions had softened between the two major protagonists in the 193-nation talks. Over the past year they repeatedly exchanged accusations of renegeing on commitments and undermining the talks. The much disputed issue involves how countries account for their actions to limit emissions of carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases and to what extent they will allow other countries to review their books. The process is known as measuring, reporting and verifying, or MRV in negotiating parlance. Details remain to be worked out and MRV is only one of several elements that negotiators want to adopt as a package in Cancun.

"Maybe the differences are not that huge," said

Su Wei, China's chief negotiator. "In general, both countries would like to promote the process" and emerge from Cancun with a deal. The veteran diplomat said China had put in place a rigorous system for measuring and assessing its carbon emissions, and had no objection if other countries examined its reports. "We have no problem with MRV," he said.

Previously, China had said only some of its actions would be open to international scrutiny. Earlier this week, U.S. negotiator Jonathan Pershing said the U.S. and China had "spent a lot of energy in the past month working on those issues where we disagree and trying to resolve them. My sense is we have made progress." He did not specify those issues.

The annual climate conference is the first since the Copenhagen summit last December, which broke up in acrimony after failing to reach a broad agreement binding industrial nations to deep emissions cuts and committing developing countries to move toward low-carbon growth. □



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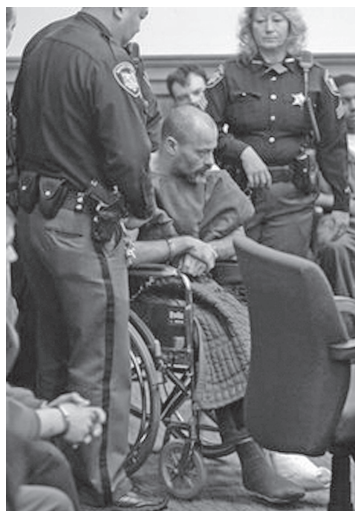
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**John Skelton appears at this extradition hearing in Lucas County Court in Toledo, Ohio, Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2010. Skelton, an unemployed long-haul truck driver, was arrested Tuesday on three counts of parental kidnapping of his sons 9-year-old Andrew, 7-year-old Alexander and 5-year-old Tanner Skelton, who have not been seen since Thanksgiving.**  
(AP Photo/Paul Sancya)

## Father of 3 missing boys fights return to Mich.

By COREY WILLIAMS,  
Associated Press

MORENCI, Mich. — A father charged with kidnapping his three missing boys fought extradition from Ohio to Michigan on Wednesday as an army of volunteers set off to trudge through fields, woodlands and dirt roads to search for the brothers who have not been seen since Thanksgiving.

John Skelton, a 39-year-old unemployed long-haul truck driver, sat throughout the court hearing in Toledo, Ohio, in a wheelchair covered by a green blanket, answering the judge's yes-or-no questions in a whisper. His attorney told the judge his client would fight his return to Michigan. Skelton was arrested Tuesday on three counts of parental kidnapping, and so far, police say, he hasn't told investigators much about where the boys might be. After Skelton fought extradition, the judge in Ohio set bond at \$3 million and scheduled another hearing for Dec. 14.

Shortly afterward, Morenci Police Chief Larry Weeks said he expected the search for the boys to continue into next week, and said investigators hadn't spoken with Skelton in "some time." Asked whether he thought the children had been killed, he said he refused to believe that "at this point."

"It is my desire to maintain hope," he told reporters during a Wednesday news conference. "But as I said yesterday, the information we have did not indicate that this is going to have a positive outcome." Weeks said Wednesday that authorities will ask the small army of volunteer searchers who have been scouring the wilderness in and around Morenci to break for the weekend starting Friday evening. He said authorities want to take the weekend to decide how to proceed with the search next week.

More than 200 volunteers turned out Monday and Tuesday to help investigators comb through fields, wooded areas

and campgrounds in search of 9-year-old Andrew, 7-year-old Alexander and 5-year-old Tanner Skelton. The boys were last seen on Thanksgiving playing in the backyard of their father's home in Morenci, a town of about 2,000 residents about 75 miles southwest of Detroit.

A similar search in Ohio was conducted a few weeks ago about 130 miles to the southeast after a mother from Howard, Ohio, her friend, 13-year-old daughter and 11-year-old son disappeared. Police say the girl was found bound and gagged in a 30-year-old unemployed tree-cutter's basement and that he led them to the dismembered bodies of the other three stuffed in a hollow tree trunk.

Three buses took volunteers from the Morenci fire hall to search areas on Wednesday morning. Michelle Williams was to be among them.

Michelle Williams, 45, said she brought chili to the hall this week for the volunteers. □



BONNE TERRE, Mo. — Police were trying to determine Wednesday what spurred a man to show up with a gun at an eastern Missouri apartment duplex where he killed his ex-girlfriend, her mother and that woman's boyfriend before turning the gun on himself when confronted by officers. A coroner also said the death of a young woman shot in a neighboring county may be linked to the killings Tuesday that shook the small former

mining town of Bonne Terre. Bonne Terre Police Chief Doug Calvert identified the gunman Wednesday as 25-year-old Nathan Fortner, whose last known address was in nearby Festus. The victims were his former girlfriend, 19-year-old Danielle Dement, her mother, 37-year-old Christine Snider, and Snider's live-in boyfriend, 32-year-old Derek Nash. Dement had been temporarily living at the duplex.

## Police try to learn what spurred duplex shootings

Calvert said Dement and Fortner were the parents of an 18-month-old boy found unhurt with Dement in a black sport utility vehicle at the apartment. He said the relationship had apparently ended, though it wasn't known if lost love was the motive for the shooting.

"I have no idea what was in his mind," Calvert said. "Somebody who could commit a crime this horrible, I could only speculate."

Police first received a call Tuesday morning that a man was trying to break down the door at the duplex on a quiet and secluded cul de sac in the town of 7,000 residents about 55 miles southwest of St. Louis.

Calvert responded. As soon as he arrived, he received a chilling call from his dispatcher.

"They said, 'shots fired, chief,

shots fired,'" Calvert recalled. "Then I saw the male subject running away."

Other officers arrived and confronted Fortner about 500 feet away as he ran toward a wooded area not far from North County High School. Fortner turned the handgun on himself. He died instantly.

Back at the duplex, Calvert found Nash dead in the doorway and Snider dead in a bedroom. A 3-year-old boy was in the house but not physically harmed.

Police soon found Dement in the SUV with her son, where she had apparently been trying to protect the boy. She was alive but died at a hospital a short time later.

Late Tuesday, the body of a 20-year-old woman was found just outside a home near Bismarck in Washington County. St. Francois County Coroner Jim Coplin said

it appeared her death was connected to the others because she knew both Fortner and one of the other victims. Missouri State Highway Patrol Sgt. Al Nothum said state investigators weren't yet willing to make that connection, and the case was under investigation.

The woman was reported missing Monday night. Her name was not released.

Calvert said an 11-year-old child also lived in the Bonne Terre apartment but was at school at the time of the killings. He wasn't sure of the relationships of the 11-year-old and 3-year-old. All three children were put in the care of the Missouri Division of Family Services.

"The 18-month-old is probably too young to remember, but I worry about what the 3-year-old will remember," Calvert said. □





### Kim Clijsters wins WTA player of the year award



This Sept. 11, 2010, file photo shows Kim Clijsters, of Belgium, holding the championship trophy after winning the women's singles final at the U.S. Open tennis tournament in New York.

*Associated Press*

ST. PETERSBURG, Florida (AP) — U.S. Open champion Kim Clijsters has been named the WTA's player of the year for the second time.

Clijsters won five tournaments, including the season-ending WTA Championships and her second consecutive title at Flushing Meadows. She was player of the year in 2005.

The 27-year-old Belgian was also honored with the player service award, given to the woman who did the most to support her fellow players through the WTA players' council or other initiatives.

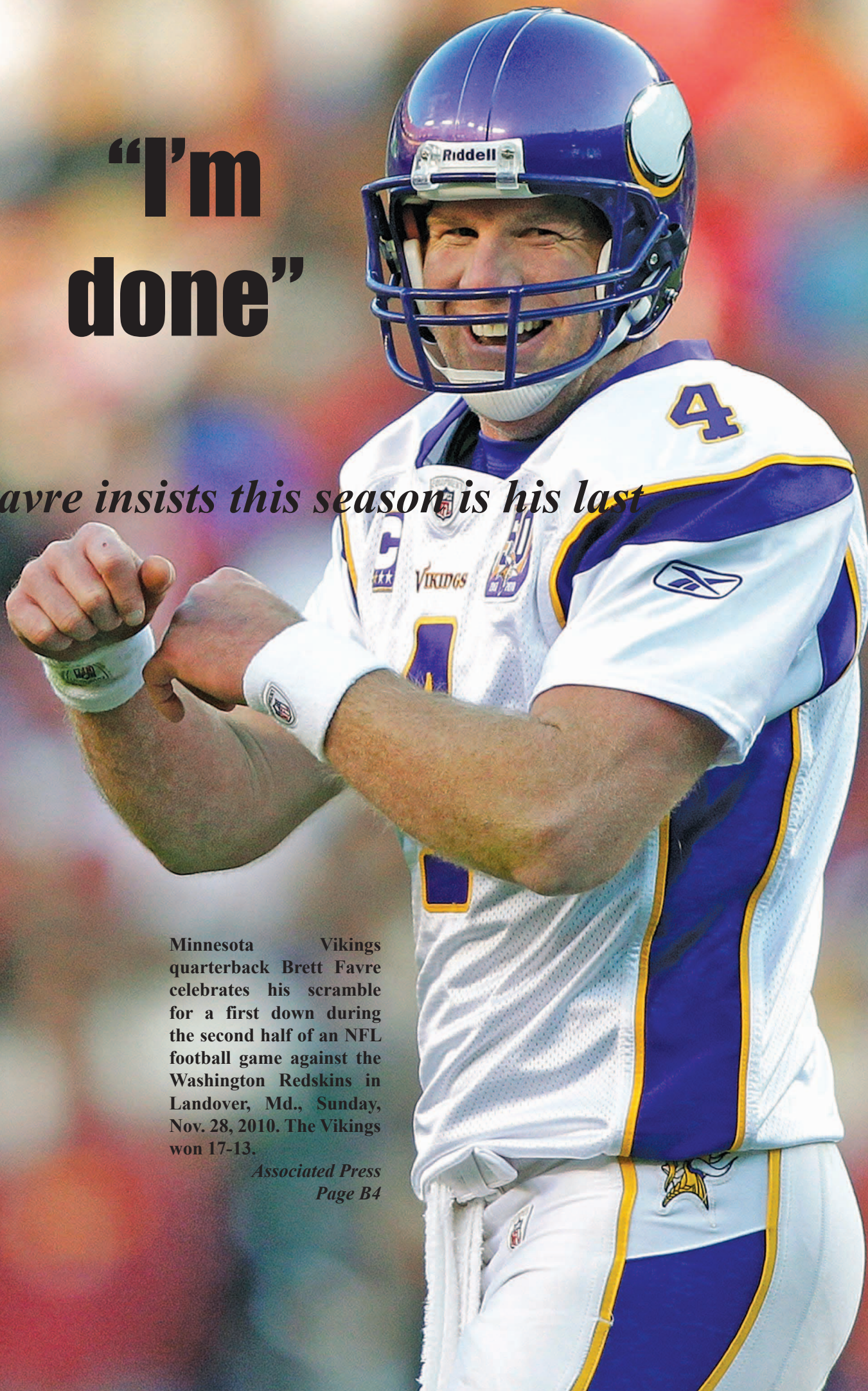
Other awards went to Belgium's Justine Henin as comeback player of the year; Maria Sharapova as humanitarian of the year; Italy's Flavia Pennetta and Argentina's Gisela Dulko as doubles team of the year; and the Czech Republic's 20-year-old Petra Kvitová, a Wimbledon semifinalist, as newcomer of the year. □

### LPGA to change gender requirement

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# "I'm done"

## *Favre insists this season is his last*



Minnesota Vikings quarterback Brett Favre celebrates his scramble for a first down during the second half of an NFL football game against the Washington Redskins in Landover, Md., Sunday, Nov. 28, 2010. The Vikings won 17-13.

*Associated Press*

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Baseball Roundup

# Troy Tulowitzki gets \$157.75 million, 10-year deal



Colorado Rockies shortstop Troy Tulowitzki talks to the media during a news conference announcing his contract extension through the 2020 season, Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2010, in Denver.

**RONALD BLUM**

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — As the Yankees resumed contract talks with Derek Jeter, another All-Star shortstop finalized a huge deal.

Troy Tulowitzki tore up his current agreement with the Colorado Rockies and agreed Tuesday to a 10-year contract worth \$157.75 million — the eighth-biggest deal in baseball history.

*Associated Press*  
“I’m really lucky,” Tulowitzki said. “I can’t wait to be here my entire career.”

His previous contract had three years and \$25.75 million in guaranteed money remaining, meaning the new deal added \$132 million and seven seasons. Baseball’s collective bargaining agreement prohibits extensions, forcing the sides to sign a new contract.

Tulowitzki wanted to emulate

his idol, Baltimore’s Cal Ripken Jr., who played in just one city, and not his mentor, St. Louis slugger Matt Holliday, whose departure from Denver a couple of years ago after 11 years with the Rockies deeply affected him.

“I didn’t want that to happen to me,” Tulowitzki said. “I wanted to stay here for my career and not deal with all the other stuff. I’m sure he’s in a great place now and I know he’s happy but at the same time, this is where I want to be.”

Tulowitzki’s contract trails two of Alex Rodriguez’s deals (\$275 million and \$252 million) and agreements for Jeter (\$189 million), Joe Mauer (\$184 million), Mark Teixeira (\$180 million), CC Sabathia (\$161 million) and Manny Ramirez (\$160 million).

Jeter and the Yankees hadn’t met for three weeks before Tuesday’s session, which was divulged by a baseball official familiar with the

discussion. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the team and agent Casey Close didn’t make any announcements.

“I feel confident that Derek will remain with the Yankees, and my brother does, as well,” Yankees co-chairman Hank Steinbrenner said, without confirming the meeting took place.

New York offered Jeter a \$45 million, three-year contract at the start of the negotiations. Going into Tuesday, Jeter had not yet made a formal proposal.

Before Tuesday, Close had suggested a contract averaging about \$23 million for four or five seasons, the baseball official said, but the numbers were suggested loosely by Close and should not be interpreted as a precise request.

“We want to keep him. He’s very important,” Steinbrenner said. “I certainly hope he remains with us and he certainly should.”

In other moves, two right-handed relievers came off the free-agent market when they agreed to salary arbitration: Frank Francisco with the Texas Rangers and Jason Frasier with the Toronto Blue Jays. Teams offered arbitration to 33 free agents last week, but the rest declined.

After finalizing a \$21 million, three-year contract with infielder Juan Uribe, the Los Angeles Dodgers also traded infielder Ryan Theriot to the St. Louis Cardinals for reliever Blake Hawksworth.

San Francisco found its new shortstop, reaching a preliminary agreement with Miguel Tejada on a \$6.5 million, one-year contract. The deal is pending a physical. Houston agreed to a \$1 million, one-year contract with catcher Humberto Quintero, and Texas gave Japanese right-hander Yoshinori Tateyama a one-year contract that includes club options for 2012 and 2013. □

## Stimulant exemptions in MLB virtually unchanged

**RONALD BLUM**

AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK — Major League Baseball granted 105 exemptions for otherwise-banned stimulants in the last year because of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, virtually unchanged from the previous year’s total.

MLB and the players’ union released the report Wednesday, covering a period that ended with the World Series.

The ADHD figure has stayed about the same for four years. There were 108 therapeutic use exemptions in 2009, up from 106 TUEs in 2008 and 103 in 2007. Baseball management says the level of ADHD among young males is higher than for the general population.

“My reaction is the same as last year and the year before that,” said Dr. Gary Wadler, chairman of the committee that determines the banned substances list for the World

Anti-Doping Agency. “It seems to me almost incomprehensible that ADHD is so pervasive in baseball to a degree that it requires medicine.” A frequent critic of baseball’s drug-testing program, Wadler said “these numbers really cry out for transparency in the TUE process in baseball — a good look-see at the process, not just the numbers.”

Rob Manfred, baseball’s executive vice president for labor relations, said MLB was encouraged “by the low number of positive” tests. “We’re always cautious that we’re not missing anything.”

Manfred emphasized the standards were determined by Smith, not MLB.

There were just two positive tests for steroids in the second full year of the sport’s toughened drug program, according to Dr. Bryan Smith, MLB’s independent drug-testing administrator. Cincinnati pitcher Edinson Volquez and Florida

catcher Ronny Paulino were suspended for 50 games each.

Without saying who tested positive for what, Smith identified the substances as Clomiphene and Oxandrolone.

Among 3,747 tests for major leaguers, up slightly from last year’s 3,722, there were 15 positives for stimulants, including 13 for Adderall and one each for Clobenzorex and Phentermine. They were presumably initial positive tests, which don’t result in discipline.

ADHD dominated the therapeutic use exemptions that were granted, with only five others approved. Of those, two were for hypertension and one each for hypogonadism, narcolepsy and post-concussion syndrome.

Smith issued the report under toughened rules baseball adopted last year at the recommendation of former Senate majority leader George Mitchell. □



TODAY



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# Kane, Toews help Chicago beat St. Louis

CHICAGO (AP) — Patrick Kane and Jonathan Toews each scored his second goal of the game late in the third period as the Chicago Blackhawks beat the St. Louis Blues 7-5 in the NHL Tuesday.

NHL Roundup Kane scored on a rebound off a shot by Viktor Stalberg with 6:18 left to put the Blackhawks up 6-4 after they nearly let a 5-1 lead slip away.

Toews then added his second power-play goal of the night about two minutes later to give Chicago a three-goal cushion on its way to a third straight win. David Backes scored for St. Louis with 2:39 left, but the Blues lost their third consecutive game.

## Lightning 4, Maple Leafs 3, OT

In Toronto, Simon Gagne made an impressive return to the Lightning lineup, scoring 1:15 into overtime to lift Tampa Bay over Toronto.

The star forward also provided a screen when Martin St. Louis tied the game with just 8.7 seconds left in regulation.

It was quite a night for Gagne, who had missed 18 games with a neck injury. The overtime winner came



Chicago Blackhawks' Patrick Kane left, celebrates with teammates after scoring against the St. Louis Blues in the third period of an NHL hockey game in Chicago, Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2010. Chicago won 7-5.

on a 2-on-1 rush with Brett Clark and was Gagne's first goal as a member of the Lightning.

St. Louis had two goals and Ryan Malone also scored for Tampa Bay.

Nikolai Kulemin scored twice and Kris Versteeg had the other goal for Toronto.

## Predators 3, Coyotes 0

At Nashville, Tennessee, Shea Weber and Cal O'Reilly each scored a power-play goal and Pekka Rinne made 33 saves as Nashville topped Phoenix.

Jordin Tootoo also scored into an empty net for the Predators, who snapped a

four-game losing streak. It was Rinne's 17th career shutout and third of the season.

The Coyotes have lost two straight following a seven-game winning streak.

## Red Wings 5, Sharks 3

In San Jose, California, Henrik Zetterberg batted a puck out of the air from the slot to score one of his two goals as Detroit beat San Jose.

Zetterberg added two assists on a night when the ice was far from its best because of a long power outage at HP Pavilion that

forced both teams to cancel their morning skates.

Pavel Datsyuk, Danny Cleary and Patrick Eaves also scored for the Red Wings. Jimmy Howard made 25 saves to win for the 27th time in his last 33 regular-season starts.

Dany Heatley, Benn

Ferriero and Ryane Clowe scored for the Sharks.

Thrashers 3, Avalanche 2, OT

In Denver, Anthony Stewart scored 1:49 into overtime as Atlanta beat Colorado to match a franchise record with its sixth straight victory.

Dustin Byfuglien and Rich Peverley added goals for the Thrashers, who also won six in a row in March 2009.

Ondrej Pavelec made 29 saves. By winning all six games during the current streak, Pavelec broke the team record for consecutive wins by a goalie. He has stopped 230 of 238 shots in the past six games.

David Jones and Matt Duchene had third-period goals for Colorado.

**In other NHL games it was Tampa Bay 4, Toronto 3, OT; Nashville 3, Phoenix 0; Chicago 7, St. Louis 5; and Atlanta 3, Colorado 2, OT.** □

*Associated Press*

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# Brett Favre says no word on NFL investigation

JON KRAWCZYNSKI

AP Sports Writer

EDEN PRAIRIE, Minnesota (AP) — Brett Favre has faced demanding questions from the media for 20 years, never more than this season while he's been embroiled in a messy NFL investigation and struggled mightily on the field for the Minnesota Vikings.

When he finally does decide to hang up the pads, which he insisted Wednesday will happen for good at the end of this long and trying season, the 41-year-old quarterback said that he may look to turn the tables. "Might be a reporter," Favre quipped. "Ask some tough questions."

He answered a few more of them on Wednesday.

After the Vikings fired coach Brad Childress, who had a well-documented history of butting heads with his QB, some figured the old man would change his mind again and decide to play in 2011. After all, Favre confidante Leslie

Frazier is the interim coach. "I'm done," Favre said, his voice hoarse from being sick for the past week. "I'm done."

The way this season has gone, it's hard to blame him.

The investigation into allegations that he sent a game-day hostess inappropriate text messages and photos while both worked for the New York Jets in 2008 has dragged on for two months now.

An NFL spokesman said Wednesday that the investigation is continuing and Favre said he has not been summoned by the league for another meeting and has no idea when it will reach a conclusion.

"To be honest with you, I haven't even thought about it," Favre said. "My focus is on this team, which is tough enough as it is. I'm not concerned about that (investigation)."

He has also been battered on the field during the Vikings' disappointing 4-7 start. Favre is playing with



Minnesota Vikings quarterback Brett Favre (4) is sacked by Washington Redskins linebacker Andre Carter during the second half of an NFL football game in Landover, Md., Sunday, Nov. 28, 2010.

Associated Press

two fractures in his ankle and has dealt with tendinitis in his elbow, stitches in his chin and stiffness in his throwing shoulder among other injuries and ailments. "Now it's malaria," Favre joked. "Got bit by a mosquito last week."

After putting together one of his best seasons last year — a 33-touchdown, seven-interception masterpiece that led the Vikings to the NFC title game — Favre is having one of his worst in year 20. He leads the league with 17 interceptions and his 71.0 passer rating is 30th, ahead of only Derek Anderson, Bruce Gradkowski and Jimmy Clausen.

Is that the way he wants to go out?

Favre knows that his history of waffling about the end of his career has left many doubters. Even some of his teammates won't believe he's done until they get a text from him while he is watching the 2011 season opener from his couch in Mississippi.

"I'm sure that will be the talk of the whole offseason," cornerback Antoine Winfield said with a hearty chuckle. "We'll wait and see what happens." Favre spoke glowingly of the way Frazier handled his first week as a head coach,

which ended with a 17-13 win at Washington on Sunday.

"He's just so unassuming. Half the time you really don't know he's there," Favre said. "But a lot of the guys have a tremendous amount of respect for him and his philosophy and it shows. The guys, I think, think the world of him."

His respect for Frazier aside, Favre sounded reflective as he pondered what is waiting for him when he finally retires. Even though this season has been such a struggle, he has no regrets about returning to play. He will start his NFL record 297th straight game on Sunday against the Buffalo Bills and holds every major passing record in the books. "As I said when I came back, I'm here to win a Super Bowl," Favre said. "We had big expectations. It hasn't gone the way we hoped up to this point, but again, my career speaks for itself. I think it's been a great career. I don't know how the remaining games will unfold but that's it." One of the savviest athletes to ever take a podium for a press conference, Favre was taken aback a little bit when asked if he was mentally ready to be done playing a game that has defined him for two decades.

"I wasn't expecting that question," he said. "That's kind of deep. I don't know. I know when I look back and maybe it's next year people say will you watch games? I'm sure I'll watch some. But, for me, everything that could possibly accomplish, I've accomplished, which is amazing."

With nothing left to prove — Favre has a Super Bowl ring to go with all those records and beat the Green Bay Packers twice last year to show GM Ted Thompson that he still had something left in the tank — he said he can head home to Mississippi without looking back.


He isn't sure what he'll do next. The long hours of coaching in the NFL make that idea a nonstarter, and he isn't immediately interested in joining the ranks of past stars who become television analysts.

When he raised the idea of becoming a reporter, someone suggested that he ask the questions at his last press conference of the season.

"I'd come in here with a long list of them," Favre cracked.


Or maybe his first interview could be Randy Moss.

"Moss?" Favre asked. "Ehhh, that'd be a tough interview." □



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# Top honors at stake in LPGA Tour Championship

ANTONIO GONZALEZ

Associated Press

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — The LPGA Tour Championship is more than just a season finale this year, with the current razor-thin margins in the race to win the player of the year honors and top spot in the world rankings adding plenty of intrigue. All that will be decided when the tournament begins Thursday at Grand Cypress Golf Club.

For the first time in a decade, Lorena Ochoa and Annika Sorenstam won't win player of the year. That leaves five in the field with an opportunity to take home the LPGA's top honor.

"We have got big pressure," said Jiyai Shin, who begins play with the top spot. Shin also has a little added pressure.

Shin and Na Yeon Choi have a chance to be the first Koreans to win player of the year. They've also noticed more Korean media than usual this week lining the fairways and greens for every practice stroke, and interview requests back home are at an all-time high. "It will be my dream come true if I get the award," Choi said.

Cristie Kerr could become the first American since Beth Daniel in 1994 to claim the award. Yani Tseng would be



South Korea's Na Yeon Choi, left, her tee shot on the 3rd hole and United States' Cristie Kerr, right, gestures after putting on the 15th hole during the first round of the Lorena Ochoa Invitational LPGA golf tournament in Guadalajara, Mexico, Thursday Nov. 11, 2010.



Associated Press

the first from Taiwan, and Ai Miyazato of Japan is also in contention.

Miyazato, however, can't finish No. 1 in the world rankings, but Suzann Pettersen, who doesn't have enough points to win player of the year, can move into the top spot with a victory.

All this is the result of the sport's top two players in retirement.

Since Ochoa bid farewell to the tour in May, the top spot

has shuffled nine times among three players — Shin, Kerr and Miyazato. None of the players in contention could ever remember the three biggest awards — which also includes the Vare Trophy for lowest scoring average — at stake so late in the season, much less the finale.

"It is exciting to have the chance, because in years past, it's been pretty much over by the half-year mark," Kerr said.

The tournament also marks the

LPGA's first in the Sunshine State since 2008.

Based in Daytona Beach, the LPGA had as many as three Florida events at one time before then but was without one last year. That came as a surprise to some players given the popularity of golf and the nearly year-round warm weather in Florida.

And with dozens of players doubling as central Florida residents, it's an added incentive to end the year at home.

"We feel we belong with a tournament here," said Paula Creamer, who lives in the Isleworth community only a few miles away. "It's just kind

of crazy that we haven't had one for a while."

The LPGA Tour Championship will keep the format it used last season, cutting to the lowest 70 scores and ties after 36 holes and an additional cut after 54 holes to the lowest 30 players and ties. That makes the margin for error even slimmer.

Especially at the top.

The format makes a big final-day push almost impossible, because to even make it to Sunday players will have to be in close contention. Of course, the five up for player of the year know plenty about winning.

They have combined to win 14 of the 25 events this year, including three of the four majors. Tseng won the Kraft Nabisco Championship and the Women's British Open, and Kerr took home the LPGA Championship.

As exciting as those others victories were, all five admitted that player of the year honors would top everything.

"For me, player of the year is kind of it," Kerr said. "It's what you see happening every year, what you wish would happen to you. And I think it's the yearlong culmination of you're the best player, this is what it was, these are the points, this is a point toward the Hall of Fame.

"It's something like winning a major championship and having that trophy in your house and seeing it going, 'That's something nobody can ever take away from you.'" □

## Holyfield to fight Denmark's Nielsen in March

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP) — Former world heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield has been lined up to fight Denmark's Brian Nielsen in Denmark on March 5, promoters said Wednesday.

The bout will feature fighters with a combined age of 93 — Holyfield is 48, Nielsen 45.

Holyfield "knows he faces an experienced boxer with a lot of fighting will," Sauerland Promotion said in a statement.

Holyfield, who held the heavyweight title four times, knocked out Francois Botha last April after losses to Nikolay Valuev and Sultan Ibragimov. He has a career record of 43-10-2, with 28 knockouts.

One of Holyfield's most memorable fights

came against Mike Tyson in 1997, when Tyson was disqualified after biting off part of Holyfield's right ear.

Nielsen, who lost to Tyson in 2001, retired in 2003 after an 11-year pro career because of a knee injury. Nielsen has had several operations and said recently he was ready for a comeback. The Dane has a record of 64-2, with 43 KOs.

Nielsen won the lightly regarded IBO title in 1996 when he stopped Tony La Rosa in the second round in Copenhagen. He also impeded former heavyweight champion Larry Holmes' hopes for a comeback, beating the 47-year-old in 1997 in a successful IBO title defense.

Further details of the bout are expected to be released Thursday. □

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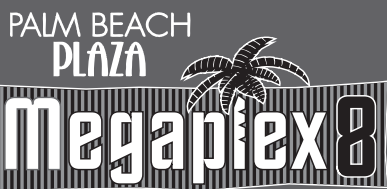
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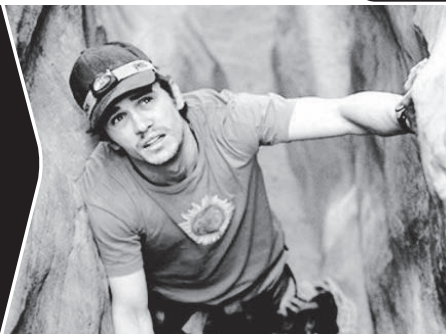
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**R**



Johnny Knoxville Bam Margera



Mon - Thurs 5:30 / 7:30 / 9:35  
Friday 5:30 / 7:30 / 9:35 / 11:40  
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**R**



Tobin Bell Costas Mandylor



Mon - Thurs 7:20 / 9:20  
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**R**



Daniel Radcliffe Emma Watson



Mon - Thurs 4:40 / 7:45  
Friday 4:40 / 7:45 / 10:50  
Sat 1:35 / 4:40 / 7:45 / 10:50  
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**PG-13**

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Mon - Thurs 5:45 / 8:45  
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Rachel McAdams Harrison Ford

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Will Ferrell Brad Pitt



WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES

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Robert Downey Jr. Zach Galifianakis

# DUE DATE

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Mon - Thurs 4:55 / 7:05 / 9:15  
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Sun & Hol 2:45 / 4:55 / 7:05 / 9:15

**R**

# LPGA to change gender requirement

ANTONIO GONZALEZ

Associated Press

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — LPGA players have voted to allow transgender players to compete on tour in response to a lawsuit filed by a California woman who had her sex changed five years ago.

The players voted to remove the “female at birth” requirement from the tour’s constitution at a year-end meeting at the LPGA Tour Championship, commissioner Michael Whan said. He said steps will be taken in the coming weeks to make the change.

Lana Lawless, a former police officer who had the sex change operation, filed the federal lawsuit in San Francisco in October claiming the “female at birth” requirement violated California’s civil rights law. The 57-year-old Lawless wanted to prevent the LPGA from conducting tournaments in the state until it changed its policy and was seeking unspecified damages.

Lawless also sued three tour sponsors and the Long Drivers of America, which followed the LPGA policy. Lawless won the annual women’s long-drive golf championship in 2008 with a 254-yard drive, but was barred from competing this year after organizers adopted the LPGA’s gender rules.

“I think it is a major civil rights victory,” Christopher Dolan, an attorney for Lawless, told The Associated Press in a phone interview Wednesday. “We are pleased that the LPGA has voted to end this archaic and outdated policy.” Dolan cautioned that the final changes are not expected for a couple weeks. But he was optimistic the LPGA’s amended policy would allow complete access for transgenders.

“You can vote to end nuclear proliferation, but if you’re still pointing the weapons, all you have is a vote,” Dolan said.

He added there were no immediate plans to drop the lawsuit, especially with Long Drivers of America offering no immediate changes to the policy, but that the lawsuit could be amended before a January hearing.

Players competing this week in Orlando were mostly satisfied with the change.

“We don’t need to comment on this because it’s a dead issue,” Cristie Kerr said. “She can compete if she can qualify. We certainly don’t want to discriminate against anybody, that’s not what the LPGA is about. And if she can qualify, she’ll be able to play. We’re like, the last sports organization to do it, it’s just we’ve never really had to look at it before.

Others who were asked about the vote said they didn’t think a transgender player would be an issue should one qualify to play on tour.

“There’s really nothing to say,” Suzann Pettersen said. “When an organization like the (International Olympic Committee) decides to accept those changes, there’s no reason for the LPGA not to. So for my point of view, it was the natural way to go.” □





# Duncan triple-double lifts Spurs over Warriors 118-98

OAKLAND, California (AP) — Tim Duncan had his first triple-double in nearly two years with 15 points, 18 rebounds and 11 assists as San Antonio beat Golden State 118-98 in the NBA on Tuesday.

NBA Roundup Duncan, who recently moved past David Robinson to become the Spurs' career scoring leader, shot just 6 of 15 from the field, but matched his career-high for assists and his season-high for rebounds.

Manu Ginobili added 27 points for San Antonio, which improved its NBA-best record to 15-2.

Stephen Curry scored 32 points and David Lee added 18 points and seven rebounds for the Warriors, who have lost eight of their last 10.

## Celtics 106, Cavaliers 87

In Cleveland, Rajon Rondo scored a season-high 23 points as Boston routed Cleveland for its fourth straight win.

Rondo, who also had 12 assists, missed his first three shots before hitting 11 of his next 14 to help the Celtics build a 20-point lead in the fourth.

Glen Davis added 17 points and Kevin Garnett grabbed 10 rebounds as Boston avenged an early-season loss to Cleveland.

Anderson Varejao and Daniel Gibson scored 16 apiece for the Cavaliers, who will next face the Miami Heat in LeBron James' first trip back to Cleveland since announcing this summer he would sign with Miami.

## Grizzlies 98, Lakers 96

In Memphis, Tennessee, Mike Conley scored 10 of his season-high 28 points in the fourth quarter as Memphis handed Los Angeles its third straight loss.

It's just the second three-game skid for the Lakers since they traded with Memphis for Pau Gasol to team him up with

Kobe Bryant in February 2008, and the team's first since March.

The Grizzlies now have won four straight at home and four of five overall.

Bryant finished with a game-high 29 points, but was 9-of-25 from the floor, including 1-of-6 from 3-point range. Gasol had 15 points and 14 rebounds.

## Knicks 111, Nets 100

At New York, Amare Stoudemire scored 35 points as the New York Knicks broke open a close game in the second half to defeat New Jersey.

Wilson Chandler added 27 points and 11 rebounds for the Knicks, who won for the seventh time in eight games and improved to 10-9. Raymond Felton finished with 21 points, 10 assists and seven rebounds.

New Jersey point guard Devin Harris injured his left knee on Chandler's basket that broke a



**This undated image provided courtesy of the Black family shows Sherry Black, the mother-in-law of Utah Jazz executive Greg Miller, who was found stabbed to death Tuesday Nov. 30, 2010 in a book shop in South Salt Lake, Utah.**

*Associated Press.*

books. Earl Black sold billiard tables at the same shop, said a longtime friend of the couple, Steve Wagner.

Wagner said he was at a loss for a motive in the slaying. "Greatest people on the planet, both of them," said Wagner, an electrician who shared rafting trips with the Blacks in Utah. "They were modest people. They didn't expect anything from their kids. They were happy." □

# Police: No suspects in Jazz owner's in-law slaying

By PAUL FOY

*Associated Press*

SOUTH SALT LAKE, Utah — A day after the slaying of Utah Jazz executive Greg Miller's mother-in-law, detectives were collecting evidence Wednesday at the South Salt Lake book shop where she was found stabbed to death.

Police had no immediate suspects in the slaying of Sherry Black, 64, who was found by her husband Tuesday afternoon at their store, B&W Collector Books and Billiards Supply, said police Officer Gary Keller.

Miller and other family members huddled Wednesday with detectives, and they planned to discuss a possible reward for help solving the case, Jazz spokeswoman Linda Luchetti said.

The husband, Earl Black, isn't a suspect, Keller said.

The Jazz will hold a moment of silence before Wednesday night's game against the

Indiana Pacers, said coach Jerry Sloan. The families do not plan to attend the game, Luchetti said. No funeral arrangements have been made. "It's a terrible thing to have to deal with," Sloan said Wednesday. "Our hearts go out to the Miller family." Miller is chief executive of the Larry H. Miller Group of Companies. He issued a statement calling the death of his mother-in-law "a senseless act of violence."

One of his team's stars, Deron Williams, had a similar reaction at a practice session Wednesday. "This world we live in is messed up," Williams said. "Things like this shouldn't happen, but they do. Everybody should be with their family." Detectives were collecting forensic evidence at the Black's shop on a busy South Salt Lake street.

Sherry Black collected used books for sale, mostly Mormon texts and children's



**Golden State Warriors' Monta Ellis, right, attempts to steal the ball from San Antonio Spurs' Tim Duncan, left, during the first half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2010, in Oakland, Calif.**

*Associated Press*

65-all tie midway through the third quarter, part of a 14-2 spurt that gave the Knicks a 10-point lead.

Brook Lopez scored a season-high 36 points and Jordan Farmar had 17 for the Nets.

## Magic 90, Pistons 79

In Orlando, Florida, Rashard Lewis scored 20 points and Mickael Pietrus added 13 to lift Orlando over struggling Detroit.

Vince Carter also scored 13 points in a win against a Detroit franchise that has caused Orlando headaches for years.

The Magic have now won seven of their past eight games.

Tayshaun Prince scored 16 points and Rodney Stuckey had 14 for the Pistons, who have lost four of their last five games.

## 76ers 88, Trail Blazers 79

In Philadelphia, Elton Brand scored 18 points and Jrue Holiday and Andres Nocioni added 11 each as Philadelphia beat Portland.

Philadelphia trailed 72-70 midway through the fourth quarter before going on a 15-4 run that put the game away with 1:50 left.

Andre Iguodala, who entered the game averaging 14.8 points, was held to seven — although four came in the fourth quarter.

Wesley Matthews scored 26

points and LaMarcus Aldridge added 20 for the Blazers, who struggled again in the fourth quarter.

They managed only 13 fourth-quarter points in a 97-78 home loss to New Orleans on Friday, then scored just 18 points in the final period in a loss to New Jersey.

## Pacers 107, Kings 98

In Sacramento, California, Danny Granger scored a season-high 37 points as Indiana used a strong third quarter to pull away from Sacramento.

The victory was the fourth in five games for the Pacers, who began their four-game road trip by beating the Lakers on Sunday.

Darren Collison had 17 points and Roy Hibbert added 16 for the Pacers.

Beno Udrih scored 24 points for the Kings, who have dropped five straight and 10 of 11. Rookie DeMarcus Cousins, who was kicked out of a Monday practice, matched his career high with 18 points.

**In other NBA games it was Boston 106, Cleveland 87; Orlando 90, Detroit 79; Philadelphia 88, Portland 79; New York 111, New Jersey 100; Memphis 98, L.A. Lakers 96; Indiana 107, Sacramento 98; and San Antonio 118, Golden State 98.** □





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## NCAA rules Auburn's Newton eligible to play



This Nov. 26, 2010, file photo shows Auburn quarterback Cam Newton before an NCAA college football game against Alabama at Bryant-Denny Stadium in Tuscaloosa, Ala. Newton is eligible to play in the SEC title game, even though the NCAA says his father broke rules by shopping his son to another school. The NCAA released its finding in a statement on Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2010.

By **JOHN ZENOR**  
AP Sports Writer

AUBURN, Ala. — Heisman Trophy favorite Cam Newton can focus on playing for the SEC championship instead of worrying about pay-for-play. The NCAA ruled Wednesday that Auburn's quarterback won't be punished for the payment scheme concocted by his father, Cecil. Instead, the younger Newton will lead the second-ranked Tigers into the Southeastern Conference championship game Saturday against South Carolina — with a shot at the national title on the line.

*Associated Press*

The NCAA cleared Newton to compete without conditions, saying it was Cecil Newton and “an owner of a scouting service” — former Mississippi State player Kenny Rogers — who violated amateurism rules. The NCAA became involved during the summer in investigating the pay-for-play scheme that was discussed during Newton's recruitment. Two Mississippi State boosters accused Cecil Newton and Rogers of trying to get up to \$180,000 for Cam Newton to play for the Bulldogs while the quarterback was being

recruited out of junior college last year.

“Based on the information available to the reinstatement staff at this time, we do not have sufficient evidence that Cam Newton or anyone from Auburn was aware of this activity, which led to his reinstatement,” Kevin Lennon, NCAA vice president for academic and membership affairs, said in a news release. The question of how much Auburn and Cam Newton knew about the scam has dogged the 12-0 Tigers since news of the recruiting scandal became public last month.

The NCAA and Auburn moved swiftly this week to bring at least some resolution. The sports governing body concluded Monday that a violation had been committed by Cecil Newton and Rogers. A day later — following NCAA bylaws — Auburn declared Newton ineligible and then requested his eligibility be reinstated.

But Lennon seems to have left the door open for future discipline. The NCAA would not say Wednesday that the case is closed, referring to its statement that notes reinstatement likely occurs “prior to the close of an investigation.”

Still, it was good news for Auburn.

The ruling at least temporarily allays weeks-long fears that the Tigers would lose the player who has helped propel them from a middling SEC team last year to a never-say-die powerhouse with a shot at the title.

It also temporarily eases concerns that Auburn's 12 wins — and any titles — would wind up being vacated if the NCAA had found that Newton had been ineligible because of violations committed before signing with the Tigers on New Year's Eve 2009.

“We are pleased that the NCAA has agreed with out position that Cam Newton has been and continues to be eligible to play football at Auburn University,” Jay Jacobs, Auburn's athletic director, said in the NCAA release.

The NCAA said Wednesday that Auburn and NCAA enforcement staff agreed that Newton's father and an owner of a scouting service worked together on the scheme. The NCAA did not name Rogers. Auburn has agreed to limit Cecil Newton's access to its athletic program and Mississippi State has dissociated itself from Rogers,

who worked for a sports agent.

“The conduct of Cam Newton's father and the involved individual is unacceptable and has no place in the SEC or in intercollegiate athletics,” said Mike Slive, Southeastern Conference commissioner. “The actions taken by Auburn University and Mississippi State University make it clear this behavior will not be tolerated in the SEC.”

It wasn't immediately clear what access Cecil Newton would have at Auburn, and school officials said they would have no immediate further comment.

The Newtons' attorney, George Lawson, told WSB-TV of Atlanta on Nov. 18 that he is “1 million percent” certain that Cam Newton did not take any money. Lawson says if Cecil Newton discussed money, his son “knew nothing” about it.

“No money has been offered to Cam Newton. Cam Newton hasn't asked for any money,” Lawson said in the report. “Cam Newton, Cecil Newton and Jackie Newton have participated in the ongoing NCAA investigation. They have been truthful and candid with the NCAA.” Jackie Newton is the quarterback's mother. □



# Review: Nookcolor is best dedicated e-reader

By PETER SVENSSON,

AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK — When Barnes & Noble Inc. began to sell its first electronic reading device, the Nook, a year ago, I found it as welcome as a bookcase landing on my toe. It was a terrible design — slow, confusing and buggy. The successor, the Nookcolor, is a huge improvement and the best dedicated e-reader on the market this holiday season.

The new color touch screen makes navigation and reading much easier. At \$249, it is great for consumers who are not yet willing to spring for a pricier tablet computer such as the iPad.

The original Nook had two screens: one big, Kindle-like gray-scale “electronic ink” display for reading and one small touch-enabled color display for navigation. It was like an unholy marriage between a Kindle and an iPod Touch, worse than either product on its own.

The Nookcolor, which went on sale two weeks ago, dispenses with the e-ink screen. The color screen has swelled to 7 inches diagonally, taking over the whole surface and making the Nookcolor look like the mid-sized product of a happy union between an iPhone and an iPad.

Other color e-book readers have hit the market this year from smaller names, including Sharper Image with its Literati. They’ve been hampered by poor screens that make the text shimmer uncomfortably. Barnes & Noble’s screen

uses the same technology as Apple Inc. does for its iPad, and it’s wonderfully crisp.

E-ink readers such as the Kindle do have one selling point: They provide a more paper-like reading experience, which sounds attractive to people who find that staring at a computer screen for hours on end is uncomfortable. However, I believe most of this discomfort derives from screens that are set to shine too brightly. I found the Nookcolor quite comfortable to read on, partly because it’s easy to adjust the brightness of the backlight for pretty much any reading environment. Blazing sunshine will still wash the screen out, though.

Most importantly, the touch-sensitive color screen makes navigation much easier. The Nook’s software isn’t exemplary in its clarity and I did experience a few glitches, but it’s not hard to get the hang of it.

Here’s how the Nook stacks up with the competition:

- Amazon.com Inc.’s Kindle has stuck to e-ink technology, which has been the norm for e-readers so far. It has only one virtue: It’s easy to read in broad daylight. In all other ways, e-ink is a disastrous technology and makes navigation a chore. The Kindle can’t show color, scroll or zoom images, and the text is dark grey on a light grey background. It doesn’t come with its own light source.

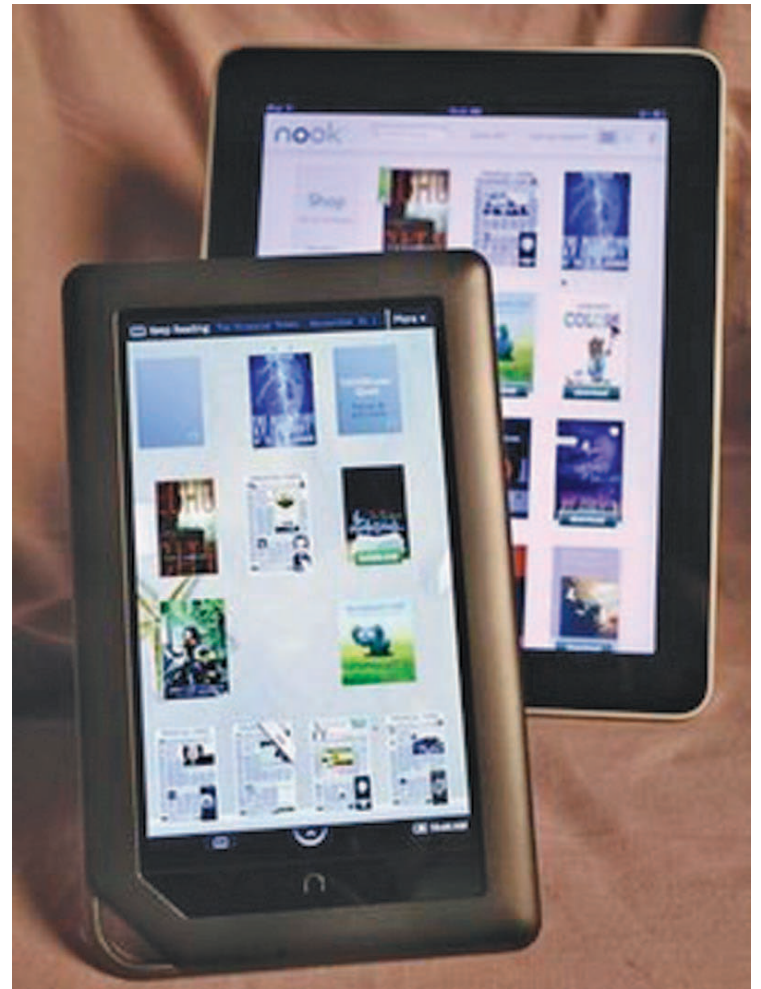
In the Kindle’s favor, the reader is cheaper, available for as low as \$139. There’s

also a \$189 version that comes with free access to AT&T Inc.’s cellular broadband network. (The first Nook was cellular too, but the current version relies solely on Wi-Fi hotspots.) The Kindle is about the same size as the Nookcolor, but weighs half as much.

The Kindle doesn’t accept e-books from public libraries. The Nook does, though it treats them as second-class citizens. They can’t be pinned to the “home” reading screen, so firing them up takes more time than with other titles.

- Apple Inc.’s iPad does far, far more than the Nook, and it is much better at presenting magazines and newspapers, thanks to a screen that’s twice as big. Magazines, in particular, are terribly clumsy to navigate on the Nook. The Nookcolor is more portable and cheaper, and its screen brightness can be turned up higher, so it’s a better choice if you plan to mainly use the tablet for reading novels. The iPad is better in every other way, so buy one if you can afford the \$499 starting price.

Apple’s iPod Touch is a viable e-book reader as well and starts at \$229, making it slightly cheaper than the Nook. The screen is a third of the size of the Nook’s. Like the iPad, the iPod Touch can access not just Barnes & Noble’s e-book store, but scores of others, including Amazon’s Kindle store. However, the small screen means that it’s best bought as a general entertainment device. If you really want



The Barnes & Noble NookColor, left, and an Apple iPad are shown in this photograph, in New York, Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2010. (AP Photo/Richard Drew)

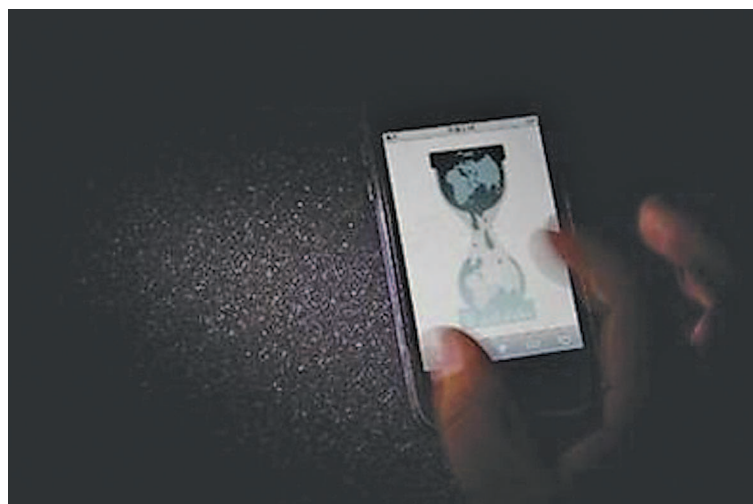
something to read books on, the Nook is a better choice.

Both the iPad and the Kindle beat the Nookcolor in terms of battery life, but at eight hours, the Nook is good enough. Expect to charge it every three or four days.

The Nook is based on Google Inc.’s smart-phone operating system, Android, but it doesn’t run any of the tens of thousands of third-party Android programs, or apps, that are available for phones. Barnes & Noble plans to launch its own app store early next year. In the meantime, the Nook does come with a Web browser and a couple

of apps, including Sudoku and Pandora’s Internet music service.

Barnes & Noble is taking advantage of the color touch screen by selling children’s books with built-in narration tracks. It’s a fine idea, and my 3-year-old daughter soon got the hang of starting up the device, navigating to a book, and following along by swiping the screen to go from page to page. But the books cost \$8 each, while iPhone and iPad apps that are more engaging and animated, such as a version of “Dr. Seuss ‘Green Eggs and Ham,’” cost just \$2 each. □



The logo of the Wikileaks website is pictured on a smartphone in this picture illustration taken in Tokyo November 29, 2010.

## WikiLeaks website, pummeled by attacks, loses home

By PETER SVENSSON,

AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK — The website of WikiLeaks, the organization that just released a trove of sensitive U.S. State Department documents, appears to have lost or left its main Web host, Amazon.com.

The main website and a sub-site devoted to the diplomatic documents were unavailable from the U.S. and Europe on Wednesday, as Amazon servers refused to acknowledge requests for

data. Availability of the sites has been spotty since Sunday, when it started to come under a series of Internet-based attacks by unknown hackers. WikiLeaks dealt with the attacks in part by moving to servers run by Amazon Web Services, which is self-service.

Amazon.com Inc. would not comment on its relationship with WikiLeaks or whether it forced the site to leave. Messages seeking comment from WikiLeaks were not immediately returned. □



# Eminem, Lady Antebellum likely Grammy favorites



**FILE - In this Sept. 13, 2010 file photo, rapper Eminem performs at Yankee Stadium in New York.**

**By NEKESA MUMBI MOODY,**  
**AP Music Writer**

Eminem's Grammy wins are in the double digits, but despite a career that has been as commercially successful as it has been critically acclaimed, he's never won a trophy for album of the year on music's biggest night. On Wednesday, he might get another shot at it. The rapper is a leading favorite when Grammy nominations are announced on the Recording Academy's annual nominations special, broadcast live on CBS at 10 p.m. EST from Club Nokia in Los Angeles. The hourlong show hosted by LL Cool J will include performances from likely nominees Justin Bieber,

*(AP Photo/Jason DeCrow, file)*

Katy Perry and Miranda Lambert. Eminem's "Recovery" is the top-selling album of the year so far, with more than three million copies sold. But more than a sales triumph, it's also a creative one, marking a return to form after years of battling prescription drugs, lags between albums, and sub par material with last year's "Relapse." There are no guarantees when it comes to the Grammys, but an album of the year nomination for "Recovery" is about as sure as it gets. Eminem is also likely to get nominations for either song of the year, record of the year, or both, for hits "Love the Way You Lie," featuring Rihanna, and for "Not Afraid." He's also

a virtual lock to be nominated in several rap categories, where he's won the majority of his 11 Grammys.

Lady Antebellum's sophomore album, "Need You Now," was almost as successful as "Recovery" and is the second best-selling album of the year. The country trio is likely to be nominated in their own genre category, but a nomination for song and record of the year for "Need You Now" is also a strong possibility. And they may get a nod in the album category, as well.

Country singer-songwriter Miranda Lambert may also find herself in the album of the year category for her "Revolution," which won top honors at the Academy of Country Music and Country Music Association awards this year.

Lambert rehearsed for the nominations concert late Tuesday at downtown L.A.'s Club Nokia, backed by a band that included a trio of guitarists as she performed her single "Only Prettier."

"I'm excited to do something for the Grammys," she said. "This is kind of a cool thing for me, an introduction to this world. There's other great artists on the bill, and it's not just country, it's across the board for music genres,

and I'm just glad to be here representing country music." Taylor Swift took home the album of the year trophy for her multiplatinum "Fearless" at last season's Grammys. Could 2011 be another crossover year for country artists?

"I hope so," Lambert said. "Country music right now, we have a great name for ourselves, and we've all worked real hard to get it out there and make it cool and I think it's working, so I'm glad

to be part of it." Sade is also a key contender for album of the year; her "Soldier of Love" received raves and was a best-seller when it was released in February, her first album in 10 years.

Other possibilities for album of the year nominations include Arcade Fire for their CD "The Suburbs" and Jay-Z for "The Blueprint 3," which spawned the massive "Empire State of Mind," another top Grammy contender. □



**A photograph of Madonna hangs in Hard Candy Fitness before its opening in Mexico City, Sunday Nov. 28, 2010. Madonna will attend the opening of her new gym in Mexico City on Monday.**

*(AP Photo/Miguel Tovar)*

## Madonna's new Mexico City gym has no permits

MEXICO CITY – Madonna may be touched by bureaucracy the very first time she opens a fitness club.

The club she launched this week in Mexico City is in danger of being shut down because it lacks a security plan and a land use permit, local authorities said Wednesday.

Officials from the singer's Hard Candy Fitness have until Friday to get a land use permit, though they will be allowed to turn in other necessary documents later, said Demetrio Sodi, the chief of the Miguel Hidalgo municipality where the gym is located.

"If they don't have a land use permit, they will not be able to operate," Sodi told the Spanish-language station Televisa. Sodi said the gym also needs to present a certificate showing it has parking.

He said that when he was told last week that the gym would open Monday, they "didn't have any permits" but he granted a special permit for the inauguration.

Madonna was in Mexico City Monday night for the ribbon cutting and taught a dance class for 20 hand-picked members with music by Paul Oakenfold, the DJ who opened her last tour.

Madonna said in a statement last week that she wanted to use Mexico "as a place to fine-tune our brand and then expand it to other countries and, in the long term, develop a global brand that includes the United States."

Membership at the gym costs about \$159 a month. It costs \$827 to join and that includes the first two months.

Sodi, a longtime political figure in Mexico, is the uncle of Latin Grammy winner Thalía. □

## With new album, El DeBarge is full of joyous tears

**By MESFIN FEKADU,**  
**Associated Press**

NEW YORK – Recording a new album for El DeBarge was an emotional experience. "It's been such a long time since I've done it," DeBarge said Tuesday. "I cried a little bit because I was so joyful and happy about it." It's been 16 years since DeBarge has released new music. He's returned with "Second Chance," his fifth solo album, which is out this week.

The 49-year-old said the tears were a result of him rediscovering his own musical abilities.

"I really wanted to know that I could still do it again and when I heard my voice I was just like, 'Wow,'" he said.

DeBarge made his comeback at this year's BET Awards in June. He's most-famous as the leader of the R&B clan, DeBarge, which featured his family members.

The performer, who was jailed for two years following a 2008 drug possession arrest, said he knew for a while that he wanted to release new music, but waited until he was clean.

"I just needed to get my willpower back and



**In this undated publicity image released by Geffen Records, musician El DeBarge is shown.**

*(AP Photo/Geffen Records, Christian Lantry)*

get off those drugs and get my strength back," DeBarge said, who had been addicted to drugs for 22 years.

DeBarge wrapped up a national tour with Mary J. Blige in October and said he's planning his own tour for 2011. He also said he's getting into acting.

"I'm playing myself in a movie that's coming out in 2011 called 'Jumping the Broom' and I'm singing," he said. "So I think it will spring off from there maybe to some acting." □



**BUSINESS****Aruba TODAY**

Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange, November 29, 2010.

## Stocks rise sharply on signs of economic growth

By DAVID K. RANDALL,  
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK – Job growth in the U.S. and signs of global manufacturing expansion sent stocks sharply higher Wednesday. Bond prices and the dollar fell as investors moved money into riskier assets.

European stocks got a boost after European Central Bank President Jean-Claude Trichet suggested that the bank could buy bonds issued by struggling countries within the European Union. That, along with a better-than-expected bond auction by Portugal, pushed the euro higher. The Euro Stoxx 50, which tracks blue chip companies in Europe, rose 2 percent.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose more than 230 points in midday trading.

All 30 stocks in the Dow index rose. Home Depot Inc. and United Technologies Corp. and Microsoft Corp. each rose more than 3 percent. All 10 industry groups that make up the Standard and Poor's 500 index rose, led by energy, industrial and technology companies.

ADP Employer Services, a payroll company, said small businesses added the largest amount of workers in three years, well ahead of what analysts had forecast.

"The U.S. economy is all about jobs and anything that leads folks to believe that there's a better job market will be good for equities," said Paul Zemsky, the head of asset allocation at ING Investment Management.

Bond prices fell sharply, pushing their yields higher. The yield on the 10-year Treasury bond rose to 2.92 percent from 2.80 percent late Tuesday. That yield is a widely used benchmark for loans including mortgages.

In other economic news, the Institute of Supply Management said its index of manufacturing activity rose in November for the 16th month.

Stocks rose in Asia after reports signaled that the Chinese economy is growing. A Chinese state index of manufacturing activity rose to 55.2 in November from 54.7 in October. Any number above 50 indicates economic expansion. Monthly readings have stayed above that number for 21 straight months. A competing Chinese survey by HSBC rose to an eight-month high. □

## Manufacturing expands for 16th straight month

By CHRISTOPHER S.  
RUGABER,

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON – U.S. factory output grew for the 16th straight month in November as consumers and businesses spent more on autos, computers and other goods.

The Institute for Supply Management said Wednesday its index of manufacturing activity was barely changed in November, dipping to 56.6 from 56.9 in October. Any reading above 50 indicates growth.

Automakers are driving the growth in manufacturing, and America's two biggest car companies reported healthy sales gains for last month. Sales rose 20 percent at Ford Motor Co. and 11 percent at General Motors in November. Manufacturing has been one of the strongest sectors of the economy since the recession ended. After slowing over the summer, factories have picked up in recent months as auto sales have grown and businesses are investing in industrial machinery and other equipment.

"American factories are catching a second wind as consumers start to flex their wallets," Sal Guatieri, an economist at BMO Capital Markets, said.

Stocks surged prior to the report's release and held their gains afterward. The Dow Jones industrial average rose more than 190 points in midday trading. Broader indexes also rose.

Investors were mostly responding to strong manufacturing data out of China and a report showing that small U.S. companies are hiring more workers.

ADP Employer Services said employment at private companies jumped by 93,000 in November as small businesses added the largest amount of workers in three



A line worker checks vehicles at the General Motors Hamtramck assembly plant in Hamtramck, Mich., Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2010. U.S. factory output grew for the 16th straight month in November, though at a slightly slower pace than the previous month.

(AP Photo/Paul Sancya)

years. Meanwhile, a survey affiliated with the Chinese government said its measure rose to 55.2 in November from 54.7 in October.

Separately, the Commerce Department said construction spending in October for the second straight month. The growth was mostly due to a 6.2 percent jump on spending for home improvements. Spending on new home construction fell.

Wednesday's ISM reading is the second-highest in the past six months. The index rose to 60.4 in April, the highest level since June 2004. The index had bottomed out at 32.5 in December 2008, the lowest since June 1980.

Daryl Dulaney, CEO of Siemens Industry Inc., said his company is seeing strong demand for industrial equipment from automakers, railroad companies, and renewable energy firms. Siemens just received a \$466 million order for 70 electric locomotives from Amtrak, he

said.

Auto companies are also ordering industrial automation equipment to boost their productivity, Dulaney said.

The ISM report showed that new orders and production also grew, but at a slower pace. Production fell steeply, to 55 from 62.7. The employment index also ticked down, to 57.5 from 57.7. That's the 12th straight month of growth in factory employment.

Exports, meanwhile, are benefiting from a cheaper dollar. The export index grew, but not as quickly as in October, the ISM said.

"Manufacturing continues to benefit from the recovery in autos, but those industries reliant upon housing continue to struggle," said Norbert Ore, chairman of the ISM's survey committee. The ISM is a trade group of purchasing executives.

The ISM surveys purchasing managers at about 350 companies around the country to compile the index. □



# Don't drink & DRIVE





# CT scans best at seeing smugglers' internal drugs

By LINDSEY TANNER,  
AP Medical Writer  
CHICAGO – The best method for finding narcotics that smugglers, or drug “mules,” hide within their bodies is the same CT medical imaging more commonly used to spot cancer, a small study by Swiss researchers suggests.

CT scans were far more accurate at detecting smuggled drugs than X-rays. But CT scanning machines and the image processing are expensive, too costly to regularly use to catch smugglers, some experts say.

In the study, all 18 CT scans on smugglers correctly detected drugs they had swallowed or stuffed inside bodily cavities. There was only one mistake — one non-smuggler was wrongly identified as hiding drugs. By comparison, conventional digital X-rays accurately detected smuggled drugs in 21 cases, but missed

nine. The X-rays also indicated drugs when there were none in six cases. A type of full-body X-ray was better than that, spotting six correctly and getting three cases wrong, but it wasn't as good as CT scanning.

X-rays are less expensive than CT scans, but also more prone to false readings, said Dr. Patricia Flach, the study's lead researcher. She is a forensic radiologist at University Hospital in Bern, Switzerland, which is especially equipped to handle drug mules.

“On plain X-rays, overlapping structures, intestinal gas and feces very often disguise intestinal packs causing false-positive and false negative read-outs,” Flach said.

Her research was being presented Wednesday at the Radiological Society of North America's annual meeting in Chicago.

The study involved 50

suspected drug mules or “body packers,” brought by customs officials to the Swiss hospital over a three-year period, or who showed up on their own because of overdose symptoms. Some were scanned with CT machines, some with X-rays and some with both.

The suspects were ages 16 to 45, most of them men; 43 of them were ultimately identified as drug mules, most smuggling cocaine from Africa on airplanes.

The research offers an intriguing glimpse into the world of drug smuggling. Flach said mules often swallow 50 to 100 packets of drugs, sometimes stored in condoms coated with wax to make them easier to gulp down. They sometimes practice by swallowing whole grapes and plums.

The packets may show up as distinct round or oblong-



This undated photo provided Nov. 29, 2010 by the University of Bern in Switzerland shows smuggled cocaine packets and pellets at the university's forensic imaging center. Dr. Patricia Flach at the university led a study that found CT scans worked better than X-rays at detecting smuggled cocaine inside the bodies of drug smugglers.

(AP Photo/University of Bern, Patricia Flach)

shaped white or dark spots on flights, to avoid losing their contraband in airplane toilets. Customs agents are then tipped off once the plane lands.

*Continued on Next Page*



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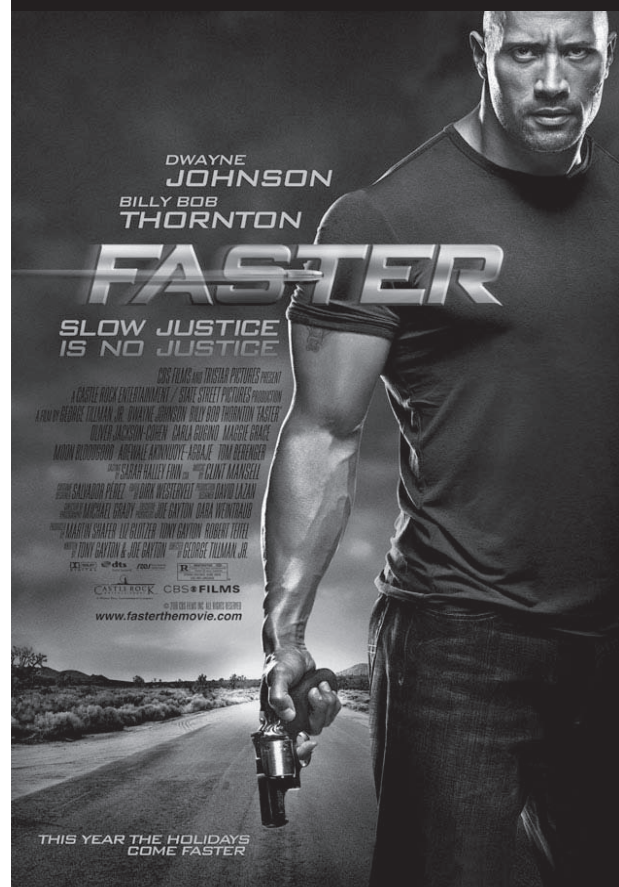
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matinee: 12.45	3.15		<b>R</b>		matinee: 1.00	3.30		<b>R</b>	
late show: 11.00					late show: 11.00				
<b>LOVE RANCH</b>	daily: 5.30	8.00	<b>NEW</b>		<b>JACKASS</b>	daily: 7.00	9.15	<b>R</b>	
matinee: 12.30	3.00		<b>R</b>		matinee: 11.30				
late show: 11.00					late show: 11.30				
<b>ANJAANA ANJAANI</b>	daily: 6.00	3.00	<b>NEW</b>		<b>DUE DATE</b>	daily: 4.30	2.15	<b>R</b>	
matinee: 12.00			<b>PG</b>		matinee: 12.00				
late show: 11.00					late show: 11.15				
<b>HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS</b>	daily: 4.15	7.45	<b>PG-13</b>		<b>HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS</b>	daily: 4.45	8.00	<b>PG-13</b>	
matinee: 1.00					matinee: 1.45				
late show: 11.00					late show: 11.15				
<b>MEGAMIND 3D</b>	daily: 4.45	2.30	<b>PG</b>		<b>UNSTOPPABLE</b>	daily: 6.15	8.45	<b>PG-13</b>	
matinee: 12.15					matinee: 1.15	3.45			
late show: 11.00					late show: 11.30				
<b>JACKASS</b>	daily: 7.15	9.30	<b>R</b>		<b>MEGAMIND</b>	daily: 4.30		<b>PG</b>	
matinee: 11.45					matinee: 12.00	2.15			
late show: 11.45					late show: 11.30				
<b>BURLESQUE</b>	matinee: 6.15	8.45	<b>PG-13</b>		<b>MORNING GLORY</b>	daily: 6.45	9.00	<b>PG-13</b>	
late show: 11.30					matinee: 11.30				
<b>SINTERKLAAS EN HET PAKJES MYSTERIE</b>	daily: 4.00	2.00	<b>PG</b>		<b>BURLESQUE</b>	daily: 6.00	8.45	<b>PG-13</b>	
matinee: 12.00					matinee: 12.15	3.15			
late show: 11.30					late show: 11.15				
<b>FAIR GAME</b>	daily: 9.00		<b>PG-13</b>						
matinee: 11.30									
late show: 11.30									

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# Tummy Fat May Threaten Women's Bones

By Serena Gordon

Not only does extra weight around the middle increase a woman's risk of heart disease and diabetes, new research suggests it also ups a woman's risk of developing osteoporosis.

In a study of 50 premenopausal women of various sizes, Harvard researchers found that women who had more fat around the abdomen were more likely to have lower bone mineral density, which can eventually lead to osteoporosis.

"All fat isn't the same. Tummy fat has a damaging effect on bone health," said the study's lead author, Dr. Miriam Bredella, a radiologist at Massachusetts General Hospital and an assistant professor of radiology at Harvard Medical School in Boston.

Bredella was slated to present

the findings Tuesday at the annual meeting of the Radiological Society of North America in Chicago.

As many as 10 million Americans, most of them women, have osteoporosis, according to the U.S. National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS). Another 34 million Americans have low bone mass, putting them at risk of developing osteoporosis, reports NIAMS. Risk factors for osteoporosis include a deficiency in estrogen, a diet lacking in calcium and vitamin D, eating disorders, certain medications, a sedentary lifestyle, drinking too much alcohol and smoking, according to NIAMS.

But extra weight was previously believed to somewhat protect against bone loss, said Bredella.

The average body mass index

(BMI) of the women recruited for the study was about 30, with scores ranging from 19 to 46. A BMI of 18.5 to 24.9 is considered normal, while a BMI of 25 to 29.9 is considered overweight. A BMI of 30 or more is considered obese, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

All of the women underwent a special imaging technique called MRI spectroscopy that allowed the researchers to accurately measure fat deposits, including fat found in the bone marrow.

Women who had more visceral fat, meaning fat around the mid-section, were more likely to have a lower bone mineral density. In addition, an association between visceral fat and the levels of bone marrow fat was noted.

"Visceral fat is deep belly fat, and it's been found to be bad for heart disease and diabetes. This type of fat releases fatty acids into the liver, and it also releases other substances and hormones that have an effect on the heart and the pancreas, and also probably on bones," said Bredella. "But, we don't know exactly what it is in visceral fat that causes problems."

As for the increase in bone

marrow fat, "a lot of bone marrow fat makes the bone weak," Bredella said.

"This study is more bad news for obesity. The one good thing we thought obesity might do -- protect the bones -- isn't true," she added.

"This is a fascinating study that raises interesting and important questions," said Dr. Judi Chervenak, an associate clinical professor of obstetrics, gynecology and women's health at Montefiore Medical Center and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City.

"Being a healthy weight and trying to control visceral obesity is becoming important from so many different angles," she stated. "You need to make lifestyle changes that focus on overall health and wellness, and exercise is very important for helping prevent osteoporosis and other illnesses. If you haven't been moving, just try to get out and go for a walk. Ideally, you'll work up to regular exercise, but get out and get some exercise," she advised.

Bredella said the researchers are currently studying fat distribution and bone mineral density in men to see if the patterns hold true for both sexes. □

## CT SCAN

### Continued from Previous Page

Or sometimes the packets rupture during the flight, causing an overdose and the smugglers have to be rushed to the hospital. In the United States, some major international airports have onsite medical centers with X-ray machines and special toilets, said John Saleh, a U.S. Customs and Border Protection officer in New York. Sometimes customs contracts with hospitals to run imaging tests on suspects, who must sign consent forms. If they refuse, they're held in custody long enough for any drugs to pass, Saleh said.

Dr. Nageswara Mandava dealt with drug mules for several years at a now-shuttered New York hospital that worked with customs agents at Kennedy International Airport.

His own research shows CT scan images are superior but too expensive and time-consuming to use routinely. X-rays generally are good enough at detecting drugs, costing about \$50 each and producing an image in minutes, versus a few hundred dollars for a CT scan, which can take hours. Mandava said CT scans are probably most useful to confirm an inconclusive X-ray.

Dr. Luis Rivas, chief of trauma and emergency radiology at University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, agreed that CT scans produce superior images. But he said cost — more than \$1 million per machine — makes them impractical at airports. Plus, they emit much more radiation so pose more health risks.

Rivas said his center used to help identify drug mules but stopped when customs priorities shifted after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Before then, vans with X-ray machines on board were stationed at various airports, including Newark, Houston, and Miami — the busiest. X-ray scans of suspects were transmitted to a computer at his hospital, where doctors evaluated them, Rivas said.

"This method was very cost-effective for the customs department because the agents never had to leave the airport and the results were available to them within minutes," he said. □

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# Fight climate change with bamboo, says campaign group



A migratory Common Kingfisher resting on a bamboo tree at a wildlife sanctuary in Singapore. World leaders pondering the conundrum of climate change should think of bamboo, a group promoting the versatile grass said at the UN talks in Cancun on Wednesday.

CANCUN, Mexico – World leaders pondering the conundrum of climate change should think of bamboo, a group promoting the versatile grass said at the UN talks in Cancun on Wednesday. Cheap, fast-growing and immensely strong, bamboo provides an answer to surging carbon emissions, generates income for the rural poor and helps tackle housing shortages, the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR) said. “Bamboo is a remarkable resource for driving economic development, and is readily available in many of the world’s poorest countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America,” said Coosje Hoogendoorn, INBAR’s director general. “It helps support the livelihoods of more than 1.5 billion people, generates more

than five billion dollars in annual trade and can grow up to one meter (3.25 feet) a day.” “Bamboo housing has been around for centuries, but many people don’t understand its full potential and still see it as the poor man’s timber,” said Alvaro Cabrera, INBAR’s regional coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean. “In fact, bamboo is stronger for its weight than steel, it’s cheaper than timber, uses far less energy in processing than concrete and can dance in earthquakes... Bamboo should be referred to as the wise man’s timber.” INBAR, a 13-year-old organisation based in China, is an inter-government organisation, gathering 36 countries under a treaty, that also fosters fair-trade and development schemes involving bamboo and rattan. It made its pitch on the

sidelines of the November 29-December 10 UN talks in Cancun, where countries are wrestling for solutions to climate change. In addition to providing livelihoods for people, bamboo forests would be an invaluable weapon against carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), the principal greenhouse gas, through photosynthesis, INBAR said. Some species of bamboo can suck up CO<sub>2</sub> at least as fast as Chinese fir and eucalyptus, among the swiftest-growing

commercial species of trees, according to a scientific report presented last month. In addition, bamboo roots reduce soil erosion, preventing hillsides and riverbanks from washing away in floods and landslides. Hoogendoorn told AFP that the group was working on a certification scheme whereby bamboo would be sold with a label proving that it came from a sustainable plantation and allowed other species to thrive. Even so, certification “is complex and very

difficult,” she admitted. One of the biggest destroyers of biodiversity is monoculture crops grown on huge spaces on soil treated with pesticides and fertilizers. Natural bamboo forests, as opposed to plantations, are a haven for many species of wildlife, including the giant panda. World trade in bamboo and rattan is more than five billion dollars a year, with China, Indonesia and Vietnam the three biggest sources, INBAR said. □

## NY pilot expands organ recovery to at-home deaths

By SAMANTHA GROSS, Associated Press

NEW YORK – Families choosing whether to donate a loved one’s organs usually have days to grapple with their decision, all while the patient lies hooked up to machines in a hospital bed. But they would have only about 20 minutes to make the choice in a new pilot program meant to recover organs from patients who die at home. That’s roughly how long a team of organ specialists will have after a cardiac-arrest patient is declared dead to arrive at the home, check a donor registry, determine medical eligibility, obtain a family member’s consent and get the person into a specialized ambulance. The program launching Wednesday — the first of its kind in the U.S., according to organizers and other



A Nov. 22, 2010 photo released by the New York City Fire Department, shows the FDNY’s Organ Preservation Unit. As part of a new six month pilot program, the vehicle will be staffed with personnel trained to get a donor family’s consent, perform medical procedures necessary to keep the donor organ viable, as well as transport the donor to the hospital to harvest the organs for transplant. If someone dies at home, the team will have roughly 20 minutes to start preservation procedures.

(AP Photo/FDNY)

experts — could eventually lead to thousands more organs donated each year nationwide. But the six-month trial, a collaboration between Bellevue Hospital and New York City’s police and fire departments, could be declared a success without a

single organ being recovered, organizers say. Instead, what’s being tested is the ability of the team — composed of two EMTs, an organ donor family services specialist and a Bellevue emergency physician — to successfully interact with grieving and shocked family members in the limited time available before it is too late to use a person’s organs. A police detective will arrive at the scene before the team to make sure there’s nothing about the death that warrants a criminal investigation. The project is “very, very modest but has the potential to prove a concept that could be revolutionary,” said Dr. Lewis Goldfrank, director of emergency services at Bellevue Hospital Center and the leader of the pilot, which is being funded with a \$1.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health Resources and Services Administration. □

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# Popularidad de presidente México sube a pesar de narco-violencia

MEXICO DF (Reuters) - La aprobación a la gestión del presidente de México, Felipe Calderón, subió a 59 por ciento en noviembre a pesar de que la población percibe un aumento de la violencia relacionada con el narcotráfico, dijo un sondeo publicado el miércoles.

El diario Reforma divulgó la encuesta cuando se cumplen cuatro años del mandato sexenal de Calderón, quien lanzó -tras pocos días de asumir- varios operativos con militares y policías contra los cárteles del narcotráfico, lo que ha dejado más de 31,000 muertos desde entonces.

En septiembre, la popularidad del mandatario había sido de 55 por ciento según una encuesta similar del diario, uno de los principales del país.

Sin embargo, el 2010 ha sido el año menos favorable en las



Imagen de archivo del presidente de México, Felipe Calderón, durante una cumbre en Seúl. Nov 12 2010 La aprobación a la gestión del presidente de México, Felipe Calderón, subió a 59 por ciento en noviembre a pesar de que la población percibe un aumento de la violencia relacionada con el narcotráfico, dijo un sondeo publicado el miércoles. REUTERS/Michel Euler/ARCHIVO

y de que ha sido lenta la salida de la recesión que sufrió la segunda economía latinoamericana el año pasado. En general, la mayor aprobación a Calderón es por el manejo de los temas de salud y educación, pero son una mayoría quienes lo desapruaban en manejo del narcotráfico, empleo y seguridad pública.

Este año la población comenzó a desapruar los operativos contra el narcotráfico a medida que se han multiplicado los casos de personas inocentes que han muerto por fuego cruzado entre sicarios o en operativos con participación de fuerzas federales.

La encuesta fue realizada entre el 19 y el 21 de noviembre entre 1,515 personas mayores de edad. Según una encuesta publicada el lunes por el periódico El Universal, un 45.7 por ciento aprueba la gestión del mandatario mexicano, frente a un 33.3 por ciento que la desaprua. □

## Superávit comercial de Brasil se reduce en noviembre

BRASILIA (Reuters) - El superávit comercial de Brasil se redujo en noviembre, en la medida en que la apreciada moneda del país alimentó la demanda por importaciones y los problemas económicos mundiales menguaron el apetito global por las exportaciones brasileñas.

Brasil reportó un superávit comercial de 312 millones de dólares en noviembre, ante un saldo positivo de 1.850 millones de dólares en octubre, dijo el miércoles el Ministerio de Desarrollo, Industria y Comercio Exterior.

Se esperaba que el país anotara un superávit de 850 millones de dólares el mes pasado, según la mediana de las previsiones de 14 analistas consultados por Reuters. Sus estimaciones oscilaron entre 100 y 1.600 millones de dólares.

Las importaciones en noviembre aumentaron a 17.400 millones de dólares, desde 16.500 millones de dólares en octubre, mientras que las exportaciones cayeron a 17.700 millones de dólares, frente a 18.400 millones de dólares.

El superávit comercial de Brasil ha estado presionado debido a que la valorización del real ha aumentado el poder de compra de los brasileños en el exterior en momentos en que la economía global lucha con la crisis de deuda en la zona euro. □

evaluaciones al presidente y muestra un promedio de aprobación más bajo respecto a los anteriores, dijo Reforma.

Un 62 por ciento de los

encuestados dijo que la inseguridad es el peor problema del país mientras sólo un 18 por ciento dijo que es la economía, a pesar de que la pobreza ha aumentado

## Cuba promueve debate sobre reformas económicas

LA HABANA (Reuters) - El gobernante Partido Comunista de Cuba (PCC) empezó el miércoles un debate nacional sobre un paquete de reformas promovidas por el presidente Raúl Castro para reanimar la economía.

Los militantes analizaron una hoja de ruta económica de 32 páginas que será aprobada en un congreso del PCC programado para la segunda quincena de abril del 2011, donde se trazará el rumbo del país para la era post Castro. La “actualización” del modelo socialista adoptado tras la revolución de Fidel Castro en 1959 incluye la reducción del papel del Estado, la eliminación de subsidios y la expansión del pequeño sector privado.

“¿Qué significa este debate? Significa la participación del pueblo en el VI Congreso del Partido (...) y la posibilidad de que cada uno exponga su criterio, sin cortapisas, discrepando si así lo considera”, dijo el periódico oficial

Granma en un editorial publicado en su portada. “Nadie debe quedarse con una opinión por expresar y mucho menos que le sea impedido expresarla”, añadió. La hoja de ruta económica preparada por el PCC de cara al congreso propone entre otros temas desarrollar el sector privado, promover la inversión extranjera, reducir los subsidios y captar nuevas fuentes de financiamiento para revivir el aparato productivo.

El texto precisa que los ajustes económicos se realizarán sin renunciar al socialismo, al que se considera la única forma de preservar los avances sociales de la revolución de 1959. Raúl Castro abrió en noviembre el debate con los dirigentes del PCC y dijo que las modificaciones económicas eran inaplazables. Castro dijo que las ideas de su convaleciente hermano Fidel, a quien reemplazó en el poder a comienzos del 2008, “están presentes en cada uno de los lineamientos propuestos”. □





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